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THE HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGICAL

AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS

THE ART OF
INDOCHINA

INCLUDING
THAILAND, VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

BY BERNARD PHILIPPE GROSLIER

CROWN PUBLISHERS, INC., NEW YORK

Translated by George Lawrence

Frontispiece: Fragment of relief with unidentified mythological scene. From the eastern half of the south front of the fifth story of the Bakong pyramid. 881 A.D.

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SOURCES OF THE FIGURES IN THE TEXT

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13. Lintel of Kulén style, Cambodia. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor. Dépôt de la Conservation d'Angkor.
14. Plan of Preah Ko, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
15. Lintel of Preah Ko style, Cambodia. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor. Dépôt de la Conservation d'Angkor.
16. Plan of Bakong, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
17. Plan of the Bakheng, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
18. Plan of Pre Rup, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
19. Lintel of Pre Rup-Banteay Srei style, Cambodia. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor. Dépôt de la Conservation d'Angkor.
20. Axonometric plan of Ta Kèo, Angkor. Drawn by Philippe Vogel.
21. Plan of the Baphuon, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
22. Tower A 1 at Mi-son, Champa: after H. Parmentier, *Inventaire descriptif des Monuments chams de l'Annam*, EFEO, Paris 1909.
23. Tower of the Po Nagar at Nha-trang, Champa: after Parmentier *op. cit.*
24. Plan of Angkor Vat, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
25. Lintel with figures, Angkor Vat style, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor. *In situ.*
26. Lintel with floral ornament, Angkor Vat style, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor. *In situ.*
27. Plan of Ta Prohm, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor
28. Lintel of the Bayon style, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation. *In situ.*
29. Plan of the Bayon, Angkor. Archives de la Conservation d'Angkor.
30. Main tower of the Silver Towers, Champa: after Parmentier, *op. cit.*
31. Sanctuary, Po Klaung Garai, Champa: after H. Parmentier, *op. cit.*

32. Wat Kukut, Lamphun, Siam: after J. Y. Claëys, *L'Archéologie du Siam,* BEFEO, XXXI, 1931.
33. Wat Chet Yot, Chieng Mai, Siam: after J. Y. Claëys, *op cit.*
34. Wat Sri Sanpet, Ayuthya, Siam: after Silpa Bhirasri, *The Origin and the Evolution of Thai Murals,* Bangkok, 1959.
35. Aerial view of That Huang, Vientiane, Laos: after H. Parmentier, *L'Art de Laos,* EFEO, Paris, 1954.
36. Axonometric view of Phya Vat, Vientiane, Laos: after H. Parmentier, *op. cit.*
37. Plan of But-thap, Ninh-phuc, Tonkin: after L. Bezacier, *L'Art vietnamien,* Paris, 1955.
38. Plan of the *dinh* at Yen-so, Ha-dong, Tonkin: after L. Bezacier, *op. cit.*
39. Lay-out of the Imperial Palace at Hue, Central Vietnam: after L. Bezacier, *op. cit.*

TABLE OF COLOUR PLATES

Bas-relief from Bakong, Angkor
Lamp holder, Dong-tac, Dong-son 29
Urn, Kandal, Cambodia 36
Head in false attic window, Nui-sam, Fou-nan 54
Krishna, Vat Ko, Fu-nan 58
Lakshmi, Koh Krieng, Cambodia 62
Avalokitesvara from Ak yum, Angkor 67
Hari-Hara, Prasat Andet, Cambodia 74
Prasat Phum Prasat, Kompong Thom 81
Pedestal, Mi-son E 1, Champa 84
Trapeang Phong, Roluos, Angkor 86
Avalokitesvara, Chaiya, Siam 88
Bakong, Roluos, Angkor 96
Tower sanctuary, Bakheng, Angkor 100
Baksei Chamkrong, Angkor 105
Pre Rup, Angkor 108
Lakshmi, Prasat Kravanh, Angkor 111
Tower sanctuary, Banteay Srei, Angkor 114
Siva and Uma, Banteay Srei, Angkor 116
Phimeanakas, Angkor Thom, Angkor 119
Ta Kèo, Angkor 121
Pediment, Vat Ek, Battambang, Cambodia 124
Reliefs, Baphuon, Angkor 126
Head of a god, Baphuon style, Angkor 129
Vishnu, Western Mebon, Angkor 131
Siva, Por Loboeuk, Siemreap, Cambodia 134
Sanctuary, Dong-duong, Champa 137
Siva, Dong-duong, Champa 139
Pedestal, Tra-kieu, Champa 145
Pedestal, Tra-kieu, Champa 148
Sanctuary, Phimai, Korat, Siam 150
Western facade, Angkor Vat, Angkor 154/155
Apsaras, Angkor Vat, Angkor 158
Western gallery, Angkor Vat 160
Southern gallery, Angkor Vat 163
Hari-Hara, Porsat, Cambodia 165
Western gallery, Banteay Samrè 167
Buddha, Silver Towers 169
Jayavarman VII, Preah Khan, Kompong Svay, Cambodia 171
Southern gate, Angkor Thom, Angkor 174
Southern facade, Bayon, Angkor 176
Southern gallery, Bayon, Angkor 178
Inner gallery, Bayon 180
Outer gallery, Bayon 181
Terrace of the Elephants, Angkor 184
Hevajra, Royal palace, Angkor 186
Buddha with *naga*, Bayon, Angkor 188
Buddha, Angkor Vat, Angkor 193
Worshipper, Angkor Vat, Angkor 195
Reliefs, Silver Towers, Champa 201
Phra Prang Sam Yot, Lopburi, Siam 202
Wat Mahathat, Savankhalok, Siam 205
Wat Suthat, Bangkok, Siam 207
Panel of painted lacquer, Bangkok 211
That Luang, Vientiane, Laos 215
Buddha, Say Fong, Laos 218
Library, Vat Sisaket, Vientiane, Laos 222
Buddha, Lu, Laos 225
Ngo-mon gate, Palace, Hue, Vietnam 227
Garden, Palace, Hue, Vietnam 230
Cambodian *Mèn*, Siemreap 233
Laotion *Mèn*, Vientiane 235

MAPS

Physical structure of Indochina 14
Pre-history and early history 24
Chinese influence in Indochina 42
Indianised Indochina (in appendix) Map I
Plan of Angkor (in appendix) Map II
Plan of Mi-son, Champa, (in appendix) Map III

SOURCES

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Depot for the conservation of Angkor
Chartres Museum
Musée Guimet, Paris
National Museum, Bangkok
National Museum, Phnom Penh
National Museum, Saigon
Tourane Museum
Vat Phra Museum, Vientiane

CONTENTS

10 INTRODUCTION

13–22 PREFACE

The landscape of Indochina (14). Geography in detail: Tonkin, the Highlands, Annam (15), Laos, Cambodia (15) the delta of the Mekong, Siam, Burma (16), Malaya (17). Geopolitics of Indochina (17): isolation from the continent (17), layers of population (18), breath of the sea (18), breath of the monsoons (19). The people of Indochina and their surroundings (20), fertility of the soil, geopolitical axes (20), time scale (20), influences of environment (21).

23–40 I. PRE-HISTORY AND THE DAWN OF HISTORY

Pre-history (23): first arrival of man (23), Palaeolithic (23), Mesolithic (25), Hoabinian, Bacsonian (25), Neolithic: Races (26), languages (27), stages of Neolithic culture (28). Early History: Bronze Age, Megalithic culture (28), Dong-son culture (31), origin of Dong-son civilisation (32), Dong-son art (33), Dong-son religion (34). The diffusion of Dong-son art (38). Indochina at the dawn of history (39). Conclusions.

41–52 II. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHINA AND INDIA: THE BIRTH OF INDOCHINA

The Chinese conquest (41): Chinese influence (43), Chinese art in Tonkin (45), Importance of assimilation to China (46). The Indian expansion (47): causes of Indian expansion (47), forms of Indian expansion (49), establishment of Indian civilisation (50), archaeology of Indian expansion (50), extent of Indianisation (51).

53–68 III. THE SHAPING OF THE INDIANISED STATES: THE KINGDOM OF FU-NAN

Fu-nan (53); historical background (55), Funanese civilisation (55), archaeology of Fu-nan (56), architecture (57), sources of the art of Fu-nan(59), beginnings of the art of Fu-nan (59), Funanese sculpture (60), style of Phnom Da (60), architecture (64). Champa (65). The Malayan peninsula and Siam (66).

69–86 IV. PRE-ANGKOR INDOCHINA: THE EMPIRE OF CHEN-LA

Rise of Chen-la: Evolution from Fu-nan to Chen-la, survivals from Funanese art (71). Style of Sambor (71). The Khmer conception of religious architecture (71). Architecture of Sambor (73), sculpture (76). The Prei Kmeng style (76): architecture, sculpture (77/78). Prasat Andet style (78): sculpture (78). Kompong Preah style (79): sculpture. Champa (80): Mison E 1 style (82). The Malayan peninsula and Siam (83).

87–105 V. THE FOUNDATION OF ANGKOR

The origins of Angkor (87): Srivijaya and the Sailendra, spread of Javanese culture (87), Jayavarman II (89). Kulên style (91): architecture (91),

sculpture (92). Indravarman (94). Economic organisation (94). Preah Ko style (98): architecture (98), the temple-mountain (98), sculpture (101). Yasovarman (101). Bakheng style (102): sculpture (104).

VI. THE KHMER EMPIRE 106–132
Koh Ker interlude (106). The return to Angkor (109). Koh Ker art (110): architecture (110), architectural carving (112), sculpture. Banteay Srei style (113): architecture (115), ornament (115), sculpture (117). The Solar dynasty (118). Khleang style (120): architecture (120), ornament (123), sculpture (124). Baphuon style (125): architecture (125), architectural carving (128), sculpture (130).

VII. INDOCHINA IN THE SHADOW OF ANGKOR 133–150
Champa (133). Cham art (135): Hoa-lai style (136), Dong-duong style (138), Mi-son A 1 style (143). Siam (144). Viet-nam (147).

VIII. THE KHMER CLASSICAL PERIOD: ANGKOR VAT 151–167
The dynasty of Mahidarapura (151). Angkor Vat style (152): architecture of Angkor Vat (153), decoration of the temple (157), reliefs (159), sculpture (164), secondary buildings (164).

IX. THE RESURRECTION OF ANGKOR 168–188
Jayavarman VII (168). Bayon style (172). The Angkor of Jayavarman VII (173). Chronology (173), symbolism in architecture (177). The Bayon (182), reliefs (183), sculpture (185).

X. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE INDIANISED STATES . . . 189–202
The death of Angkor (189). Survivals of the art of Angkor (190). Cambodia after Angkor (191): Buddhist art of Cambodia (192). Champa (194): Binh-dinh style (197), the end of Cham art (198).

XI. THE THAI CONQUEST: INDOCHINA UNDER THE SPELL OF THE BUDDHISM OF RENUNCIATION 203–225
The Thai invasion (203). The formation of the Thai kingdoms (204). The formation of Thai art (206): Khmer models (206), survivals from the art of Dvaravati (208). Thai art (208): art of Sukhothai (210), regional schools (214). The art of Siam (215): Ayuthya style (216), painting (219), Bankok style (221). The art of Laos (223), achitecture (223).

XII. VIETNAMESE INVASION AND THE IMPACT OF EUROPEANS 226–236
The Vietnamese conquest (226). Art of Vietnam (226): Tran art, Lê art (227), Nguyen art (232). The impact of Europeans (233): the end of national art (235).

APPENDIX . . . . . .
Pronunciation (238). The names of the monuments (238). The names of the kings (239). Glossary of the most important technical terms (240). Tables of main events I–III. Map I, the Indianised states of Indochina: map II, plan of Angkor. Bibliography (240). Index (254).

PREFACE

The most striking achievements of the various peoples of Indochina have been in the sphere of the plastic arts. The main reason is that, for the most part, they are the only arts to survive from the past. Their music and dancing have quite vanished, though it is otherwise in India and Indonesia, and there is a great shortage of religious and historical texts. Particularly for the first five or six centuries of our era, a time when the great civilisations of the peninsula were taking shape, we are forced to rely on a few inscriptions and the scanty testimonies of Chinese historians. Only archaeological excavations can enlighten us, but apart from chance finds and the results of very limited researches, this is almost a virgin field. It is only from the 7th century that inscriptions become more numerous. We can then weave a more substantial tissue of history, and trace the evolution of religion. It is, however, especially the temples, which from that time onwards were built of brick and stone and so have resisted time, that can give us an impression of the civilisations which conceived them. We must therefore concentrate our main attention on them. All too often we must admit that we know little of the life of the men who built them. However, we shall at least find, and this is the second advantage of studying the arts of Indochina, that these monuments constitute the most original and the most important contribution by the peoples of the peninsula to the sum of man's cultural inheritance.

Unluckily, after this wonderful flowering, roughly about the 13th century, the whole political equilibrium of Indochina was almost completely upset, and the great empires of earlier days either succumbed entirely, or only survived under great difficulties. In the first case art utterly disappeared, while in the second, stone building and carved inscriptions gave way to wooden constructions and writing on frail palm leaves, all of which have been lost. Moreover the political insignificance of the new nations led to their being ignored by those of their neighbours who wrote history. So, paradoxically, we are less and less well informed about the ages that draw nearer to our own. Even the arrival of European sailors in the 16th century does not mean that we have much more information, for they hardly recorded anything of note, which contrasts with their remarkable observations elsewhere, especially in China. It was not until the 19th century, with its tentative but scrupulously scientific researches, that any objective account of Indochina began to be given. However this eagerness for knowledge came just at the moment when most of these civilisations were finally disintegrating under the impact of Western thought and techniques. Moreover at this time, when the science of

ethnology was still unknown, hardly anyone thought of interrogating living men, and indeed any connection between them and the builders of Angkor or Mi-son was doubted. We have thus irretrievably lost everything from the past which may have been preserved in their *mores* and their ideas.

Despite the untiring efforts of some scholars, very little has been brought to light. This is primarily because the task is huge, and one cannot do everything. But one must admit that it is also because "history" is not only based on what the play of time and chance have allowed to reach us, but also, and to at least as great an extent, on what our chance tastes and opportunities have considered alone worth saving from the flotsam.

Indochina, for instance, has long been considered an area of secondary importance, where there was nothing better to do than notice the features borrowed from India or from China, the two lands whose names had been somewhat contemptuously compounded to provide a designation for the country. Beyond that, only Khmer civilisation commanded attention, to the detriment of other civilisations no less significant. Moreover philologists and historians made much quicker progress than the archaeologists and ethnologists who had to face all the difficulties of research on the spot. No one must therefore be surprised if the picture presented here is neither logically constructed nor harmoniously fitted together. From the very nature of the sources and the chances of research, our study is bound sometimes to be excessively detailed, and at other times to expose desperate gaps. While one can give a solid account of the classical age of the Khmer and of the Cham, one must be content with a sketch of how the arts of both took shape. When it comes to the mediaeval and modern periods, we can indicate the point of departure and describe the stage reached, without any real appreciation of the progress of their evolution. Beyond these fields lies an immense *terra incognita:* so our silence must not be interpreted as due to contempt or neglect, but to simple powerlessness. To close the gaps as far as possible, we have tried to lay bare the main tendencies which we think express the genius of these civilisations. No one knows better than ourselves that these are no more than working hypotheses. So let them be taken as such, and taken as themes to reflect on. For we have to be resigned to the great weakness of "history", which is, after all, only a commentary (presented as an explanation) depending on a logic which is personal to ourselves (and not absolute), and depending on the feelings aroused in us by certain works of the past, works which our natural affinities have led us to select.

I must further stress two inadequacies. First Vietnam is not my special field of study, and I have only agreed to deal with it here because it seemed helpful to sketch the arts of Indochina as a geographical unity. Second, to be consistent I should have dealt with Burma, which is included in the volume of this series devoted to India, although logic would have required

its inclusion in this one. I preferred to confess my incompetence for that task, for my ignorance about Burma is complete, whereas I have at any rate travelled through Vietnam.

I cannot end without paying tribute to the inexhaustible patience and exigent taste of our editor, Gerard Holle, to whom this book owes all its merit. He was kind enough to accept my choice of illustrations, though they were hard to assemble. I tried to select both the most significant and the most enjoyable photographs, but yet tried to be sure that they were objective, and not interpreted by the camera. I have not hesitated to reproduce a monument illustrated many times before, if it dominated that field of art or gave it its finest expression. On the other hand in the case of works that are important, but not so charged with emotion, I have thought it best to refer the reader to the publications where they can be found. Luckily good books are now growing commoner in this field. In return, I have illustrated some unpublished or little known works, sometimes finding myself embarrassed to say exactly what their date is, but confident that it is worth calling attention to neglected, sometimes even unsuspected, fields of study. To do that, unfortunately, sacrifices were necessary, and I am very conscious of the things left out of this book.

I hope that it may at least possess the merit of arousing interest in the arts of the peninsula of Indochina, a subject which is here treated as a whole for the first time.

Paris/Angkor 1959–1961.

INTRODUCTION

LAYOUT OF INDOCHINA

On the map Indochina looks like an open hand stretched out from Asia into the Pacific. There at the south eastern extremity of Asia, where the vast bow of the Himalayas comes up against the mountain mass of south China, it throws out like a fan into the sea. And the mountains of Malaya with the volcanic chain of Indonesia carry the curve round eastwards towards Australia.

Between these majestic ranges with their high tablelands and the primary massif of the hinterland, flow those great rivers which shape the land, carrying down their loam. The Red River, Mekong, Menam, Salwen and Irawadi all have their sources in the catchment area of Yunnan, whence they flow, some to China sea and others to the Indian ocean, carving their way through the mountains and spreading out their deltas. It is they that divide up the peninsula, and it is along their banks that man first found a home.

Nature has divided this imposing landscape into particular "countries" with peculiar characteristics, so that their future destiny has been partly foreordained by geography. A short description will show both their diversity and their uniformity.

Tonkin

In the north the delta of Tonkin is the most important feature. Though only some 6,000 square miles in extent, it is rendered fertile by the loam swept off the great clusters of mountains to the north by the Red River in its course. But the river which made the land, also destroys it. There is a fantastic variation in its strength, going from 500 cubic yards of water at its lowest to 35,000 when in spate. To be turned to use it must therefore be controlled, and this the Vietnamese have done in Chinese fashion, by shutting it between dikes. Unfortunately that method has hidden perils and only makes the danger greater. Within its dikes the riverbed rises. At Hanoi now it flows a good 25 feet above the level of the plain. If the dikes give way there is a disaster, which can only be retrieved by making the dikes still higher, and so creating an even more terrifying menace. But this continual struggle was to instruct a hardy race of men in the art of working together.

The highlands

Like an amphitheatre around the delta, first hills, then mountains, rise towards China and Laos. The population on the lower slopes is very like the Vietnamese and the Thai, but isolation, division and poor resources long ago made them fall behind in the march of progress. Though the Red and Black rivers cut like a sword through the amorphous mass of mountains, communications to the north west and west are almost impossible. Even had men been able to travel that way, they would only have

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF INDOCHINA

found even more desolate mountains, to which Chinese civilisation only came late and sporadically. So trade with China was first opened across the gentler slopes of the Hundred Thousand Mountains, by way of Langson and Cao-bang; and after that came trade between the Thai and the Vietnamese, who are the autochthonous peoples of the Blue and Red river basins.

There was also trade by sea. The shape of the delta itself was always changing, but that part of the Gulf of Tonkin where projecting portions of the Hundred Thousand Mountains range have been submerged under the sea, forming a chain of islands, capes and bays, offers a number of small havens, safe from typhoons and heavy seas, from which junks could ply to the coast of southern China.

Annam

Further to the south there stretches an almost impenetrable chain of mountains, with the *cordelliera* of Annam as its backbone. To the east there is a thin band of coastal plains, while to the west the mountains fall in broad stages gradually down to the valley of the Mekong.

These coastal plains turned out to be well suited to man's needs. The sea was there with all its resources and opportunities. The narrow valleys opening out from it were both easy to cultivate, and offered access to the forests on the hills, where were essences and medicinal herbs, cinnamon, incense, cardamum and ivory. It was there that one of the earliest and most brilliant centres of Indochinese civilisation came into being, the Dong-son culture first, and later that of Champa.

Laos

On the other hand the land-locked valley of the Mekong had fewer advantages to offer, and those were of another sort. The upper reaches of the river, wandering through a narrow valley shut in by cliffs, were too far from the sea to make the home of a great nation; but in its middle course the land around Vientiane, and the wide tableland of Roi Et watered by the Se Mun flowing from the west, had the makings of a favourable homeland. It was indeed inland, but it could reach the sea down the river through the open plain of Cambodia, which it dominated. It was there that the powerful Chen-la had their home, and it was long to remain a key position in the history of Indochina.

South of the 15th parallel the *Cordelliera* of Annam ends in the compact, unwelcoming mass of the Moi highlands. There, as in the highlands of Tonkin, the country is too impenetrable, cut up and infertile to allow any unitary culture to develop. Moreover round Cape Varella the highlands fall directly into the sea, thereby ending the chain of coastal plains of Annam. Right down to the 19th century this barrier prevented the Vietnamese from going further south, and formed a natural Great Wall keeping the area of Indian influence separate from that of Chinese.

Cambodia

South of the arc of the mountains of central Laos, and west of the Moi highlands, lies the wide open plain of Cambodia, whose formation was one of the strangest phenomena of nature, dictating the future life of

the land through several millenia. The plain of Cambodia was originally a gulf of the sea, but the salt waters slowly withdrew, leaving this great area drained by nature. The great lakes, and the Tonlé Sap flowing out from them towards the Mekong, are relics of the land as it used to be. That river flows in two branches through its delta to the sea, but those branches are not large enough to take all the water that comes down in June, when the snow melts in Tibet and the south west monsoon sets in. So part of these waters flow back along the Tonlé Sap into the lakes which overflow their banks, and spread so that they cover 4,000 square miles instead of less than one thousand. At the same time the river inundates the lowlands, covering them with fertile loam. In September the Mekong goes back to its normal flow, while the Tonlé Sap, again reversing its course, carries the water of the lakes down to the Mekong and so to the sea. The town of Phnom Penh, built at the very beginning of modern times, is in the centre of the country, just at the point were the Tonlé Sap meets the Mekong. In early times, when Cambodia included more of the peninsula, the plain stretching from the northern banks of the lakes up the middle course of the Mekong was the homeland of the Khmer Empire, the greatest power in Indochina.

The delta of the Mekong

The Mekong finally reaches the sea further to the south in what used to be Cochin China. The river and its many subsidiary streams to north and south which have never settled down in any fixed bed, have not allowed the delta to be a congenial habitat for mankind, and the same is true of the final projection of the peninsula, which is always liable to flooding from the sea. But the land to the west of the Bassac, which stretches along the gulf of Siam, is rich and easily cultivated loam. This advantage, together with access to the sea and to India, make it an excellent place to live in. And it was there that Fu-nan, the first great cosmopolitan kingdom of Indochina flourished.

Siam

West of the Mekong flows the Menam, forming its delta east of the Dangrek range and of the mountains of Cambodia. However, compared to the Mekong, it has been no great creator of new land. Moreover its slow stream is easily driven back by the sea, and the land it flows through is so level that, at the slightest excuse, it overflows its banks. However it does offer convenient access to the sea, if only on the gulf of Siam, which is too far off the main seafaring routes. So, though it provides a favourable setting for men to live in, one is not surprised to find that through the centuries only states of secondary importance have developed there, and they have always been outshone by their eastern neighbours, Fu-nan or Cambodia.

Burma

Still further to the west Siam is shut in by the high, steep mountain range whose extension to the south forms the peninsula of Malaya. Undoubtedly we should still count Burma as part of Indochina, for it too is watered by the Salwen and Irawadi whose sources, like that of the Red river, are

in Yunnan. But it is too close to the Himalayas, and too much spread out along the bay of Bengal, not to come directly into the Indian sphere of influence. We cannot forget its existence in this book, if only because more than once Burma impinged, with great force, on Siam. But Burma's development was basically dependent on her great neighbour to the west, and she took no real part in the life of Indochina until after the 13th century, a period when almost all the great achievements in the peninsula were things of the past. So Burma is not a main subject of this book.

Malaya

The Malayan peninsula certainly falls outside the limits of Indochinese history, in spite of the too widely accepted theory that is was a necessary link in the chain of Indian expansion. It is indeed true that in prehistoric times there were flourishing settlements in Malaya, and it was by that route that man moved down into Indonesia. But when great civilisations arose in Indochina, they were unaware of Malaya. Only the north eastern coastal plains formed part of the Khmer empire, as they are fundamentally just an extension of the Menam delta. For the rest, the narrow coastal fringe at the foot of mountains, stifled under tropical vegetation, left man too few natural resources for any real progress. There was a certain flowering of culture in the southern part of Malaya, but it was like an island independent of Indochina, and the flowering only took place when it was part of the island empire of Srivijaya. Only much later, when first the Arabs and then the Europeans had opened up sea travel between the continents, did Malaya come to be of worldwide importance as a staging post on the great sea lanes.

GEO-POLITICS OF INDOCHINA

It will have become clear from the foregoing that various physical characteristics of the peninsula must have influenced and limited human activity there. In the first place Indochina is completely cut off from the mass of the continent of Asia, and shut in on itself.

Isolation from the continent

To go up the rivers, which are the sole means of communication inland, leads but to the inhospitable wildernesses of Yunnan and Ssechuan. Even the difficult journey over the Bhamo pass only leads to the most outlying and least populated area of China. Overland it is only from Burma that India can be reached, and then the way is difficult over the wild mountains of Assam.

There are few overland routes within Indochina. The sole road between Burma and Siam is that of the Seven Pagodas, which only serves the southern part of each country. There is no road between northern Siam and Laos, and none between Laos, Tonkin and Annam. The pass of Wadhana between Siam and Laos is remarkable for the fact that no one goes that way, for the whole population of those countries lives in the deltas or along the river banks, and therefore far from that pass. Between Annam and Cambodia is the towering wall of the tablelands.

So by its physical nature Indochina is a land of juxta-position, not fusion. And the great civilisations there did remain practically isolated one from

another from the very beginning. As they expanded, naturally they came into contact, and later fought each other. But that took at least a millennium. The only exception was the plains of Annam which are a direct continuation of the Tonkin delta. The two halves of those plains were originally occupied by different peoples, the Vietnamese and the Cham, who clashed so relentlessly that the conflict could only be solved by the total disappearance of one or the other.

Men of plains and of hills

Besides being boxed in, Indochina is divided internally into horizontal strata. There was always tension, sometimes unbearable tension, between hill and plain. Only the watered lowlands could support advanced civilisations. The mountains either tangled over with dangerous forest, or washed down to bare rock, and broken up into narrow closed valleys, sheltered only small groups of men, often outcasts. Contact between men of plains and hills was slight. The prosperous lowlanders would come sometimes to seek medicinal herbs, sometimes raiding for slaves. The poor mountain communities had to put up with this, for they lacked the power to take revenge. They could only offer asylum to the oppressed of the plain, or those who were turned out by more powerful invaders. Thus in the course of time the slopes of the Indochinese mountains came to harbour a strange kaleidoscope of all the remnants of peoples driven thither by successive waves of invasion in the plains.

Perhaps this was not exactly so in the very beginning. The swampy deltas and the valleys bordering capricious rivers must then have presented insurmountable obstacles to crude societies just beginning to master primitive techniques. It seems likely that some of the earliest civilised settlements must have been placed on the lower slopes, close to the deltas and valleys, for it was more convenient to live there. But as they progressed and improved their techniques, the only real possibility of expansion was to make use of wider cultivable areas. The watered tablelands were occupied first, for example by the Chen-la in lower Laos; later the deltas and the plains were peopled. Hence the nature of the lowlands was bound to determine the hierarchy of civilisations. The largest, most fruitful and most unified plain in Indochina is that of Cambodia, and it moreover has the added advantage of great lakes and a central position. It was there that the most brilliant civilisation flourished. Next come the deltas of Tonkin and Siam with their more limited natural resources. But the plains of Annam seem very small in comparison to the part they played in history. However there was another equally important stimulant to progress, the sea.

The sea

Shut off from the continent, Indochina is open to the sea. Whereas the vast land masses of China and of India so monopolise the attention of the Chinese and the Indians that they generally have taken no notice of the seas around them, for Indochina, the sea is the very breath of life, and without it the peninsula would again become, what it is geographically, an outlying extremity of the world.

It was from across the China sea and the bay of Bengal, each from early days a "mare nostrum" of the two great centres of Asian civilisation, that Indochina received the most precious gift of civilisation, that of writing. Further afield, and perhaps from still earlier times, Indochina was open to influences passing through Indonesia and Malaya, from across the wide oceans. Their importance has not been sufficiently realised but they did play a great part in the development of Champa, and a lesser one in that of Cambodia and Vietnam. It is obviously important that Indochina lies along the north east - south west axis from China to India, the path of the monsoons, but it is perhaps equally worth noting that Indochina sticks out like a bridgehead from Asia towards Oceania along a north west - south east axis. The orientation of world politics in our day is proof enough of that, beginning with the movements of the armed forces in the Second World War. Lands, seas and winds all converge on Indochina, which is still in the centre of the struggle. It is clear that this life-giving breath from the sea was bound to determine the vitality of the local civilisations. And in fact the delta of the Mekong, being both the most inviting zone for human habitation, and very well placed on the route from India to China, was the home of the first and most brilliant of the cosmopolitan civilisations of the coast, that of Fu-nan. The more remote, enclosed and smaller deltas of Tonkin and Siam only played, as we have seen, a secondary part. Similarly, though the land side of the coast of Annam has less to offer, its many harbours on the direct route between China and India with good points of departure for Indonesia and beyond, made it the home of Cham civilisation.

The monsoons

Other factors besides physical structure shaped the destiny of the land; for example, the climate. It is, of course, tropical, as the peninsula is neatly confined between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator. Contrary to what one might casually suppose, such a climate is not necessarily the most favourable for man. The whole year through he is subject to a debilitating heat, which in any case lowers all physical vitality, and may indirectly shatter it completely, by breeding the parasites which carry the scourge of malaria and other tropical diseases.

The monsoons provide the only break in this continual oppressive heat. From June to September the south west monsoon blows, heavy with the waters of the Indian Ocean. From November to April the north east monsoon blows from the Pacific. But once again the physical structure of the land, always the great dividing force in Indochina, causes the impact of the monsoon to vary in different parts. Only the winter monsoon reaches the lands to the north of the mountains of Annam, lands which are also subject to cultural influence from China, as if they came blown along by that wind. At that time southern Indochina swelters beneath a pitiless sun, and does not revive again until the summer monsoon comes blowing over the ocean, along the same paths as the wave of civilisation from India

which shaped men's ideas in this part of Indochina. However, these damp clouds do not cross the mountains of Annam or reach the plains of Tonkin any more than the spirit of Indian civilisation did. All sailing ships, slaves to these mighty winds, must follow the course of the one or the other, and, till the coming of steamships, they were the rhythm of all sea communications.

The soil

As a whole, Indochina does not lend itself to cultivation. The soil is poor for it is furrowed by the torrential rains and robbed of all its mineral elements; moreover it is covered with tropical vegetation which has to be cleared and returns the moment man's efforts slacken. Yet the inhabitants of the peninsula have always lived, and still do, from the land. So the larger and easier to exploit the cultivable zones are, the greater their population; density varies inversely to altitude. But although the plains are the best places for habitation they are not suitable in their natural state. They can only be tilled if there is sufficient water, or if, on the other hand, man drains it away; any how between the monsoons there are always from six to eight months of drought. There is, of course, the land bordering the great perennial rivers, but, as we have already pointed out, these are capricious and fluctuate violently. As for the swampy, shifting unhealthy deltas, they were the hardest ground for man to master, and it was not until fairly late that he settled there, when he had learnt how to organise a collective effort. Even today 85% of the land of Indochina is almost uninhabited. Only where there is an abundance of water on flat land is the soil of Indochina habitable. All these factors were bound to limit the directions in which human expansion was possible.

Axes of population movements

Within this Balkanised peninsula, shut in by land but open to the sea, there are two main internal trends of population movement: from north to south and from mountain to plain. All the great movements of peoples have followed these two main directions, coming down from the highland to the lowlands, and from north to south. But civilisation spread in the reverse direction from plain to hill and from south to north, starting from the coast where it made its first impact. This "call of the south" heard not only in Indochina but almost universally throughout Asia, still governs today the urge to expand felt in China and Japan. And the spread of civilisation in the opposite direction is still equally marked, for the main cultural waves reaching Indochina in more recent history, have been those of Islam and of the West, both coming from the south and from the sea.

Nature's rhythms

We can also detect other and subtler effects of geography. First comes the attitude to time. Days and nights are of almost equal duration throughout the year, and the tropical sun follows a uniform path across the sky. This has an important influence on the Asiatic conception of time. The most important date to celebrate in the solar year is the coming of summer. But the sun is hard to see though the dusty haze of heat, and

is quite invisible in the months of continual rain. But it is easy to follow the phases of the moon in the starlit nights. As soon as man had realised the relationships between the position of the sun and of the moon, he was on the track of a calendar well-adapted to the region. So the whole of south eastern Asia came to use this lunar-solar calendar, which makes time seem like something even and uniform, without beginning and without end, eternally revolving on itself, and never, as in Europe, progressing. Time seems to spread out rather than to pass by.

The only striking break in the monotony is the arrival of the wind and rain of the monsoons. As this rain is the source of all life, both directly, and by feeding the watersheds of the rivers, much the same ideas are attached in men's minds to the monsoons, as in our climate are connected with spring festivals of the awakening earth. As the great communities which subsequently developed in Indochina accentuated their dependence on the rains by their agricultural methods it was natural that water should become pre-eminent.

These dualities of mountain and plain, earth and water, land and sea, enter into all the cosmological systems of Indochina. While the fertile lowlands and the rains were the sources of life, the mountains always had just as much significance. This may have been because, in the beginning, man chose to live in their shadow. They retained a magic power as the home of ancestors' spirits, and in later conceptions, as the seat of the gods. The sea stretching out beyond the horizons of men's knowledge, was vaguely conceived as the origin of all things, as the world before creation, and also as the unseen home of the dead.

MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT IN INDOCHINA

All this shows that the character of the people in Indochina must have been profoundly influenced by the natural features of the land in which they lived. However, we must not give way here to a facile determinism. With our present limited historical knowledge we can hardly say that a certain climate, or a certain configuration of the land is bound to produce a particular type of society. Indeed I am inclined to think that this is not so, at least after a certain stage of evolution has been reached. It is possible that, in the beginning, when man was still powerless in face of the external world, he was more or less shaped by his surroundings, though that has still to be proved.

When we come to man in the first organised communities which archaeology has revealed to us, we find him possessed of tools and methods of work which insure him a more or less tolerable life, for which he is not exclusively indebted to his surroundings alone. Nature, of course, plays a part, but more by deflecting or hindering progress than by dictating it. No *a priori* reason forced the Indochinese to cultivate rice, to tame buffalos, to build houses on stilts or to chew betel. Such things are rather due to chance, or the influence of other peoples. It has been found more than once that when societies which have already worked out a certain

way of life are forced to move into different surroundings, instead of adapting themselves to these, they seek, against all reason and often under terrible difficulties, to carry on their old way of life in the new environment, even when the latter is in no way suited to it. The result is often the total failure and collapse of the society in question. The more a society has perfected its organisation and ways of work, the more surely will it force nature, in spite of what have been called her iron laws, into its own pattern. Thus the empire of Srivijaya, the expansion of the Thai and the power of Angkor, give the lie to the basic lines of development which seem to follow from the physical structure of Indochina. The interaction between man and his surroundings is a much more complicated matter than we tend to assume and we should be well advised to be on our guard against comfortable over-simplifications. All we can say is that the various communities of Indochina at the dawn of history were influenced to some extent by their environment, especially by the particular opportunities which it offered in the way of agriculture and communication.

But we have yet to trace that most uncompromising factor in all history, the actions of man, who knows no law greater than the needs of his own existence. We shall try to do so by studying what is both the most concrete and the most abstract product of society, its art. It is the unique prerogative of art to provide both expression for the values of society, and self-expression for the artist himself.

I. PRE-HISTORY AND THE DAWN OF HISTORY

No doubt one could leave out pre-history and the dawn of history in a book about the arts in Indochina. For, in contrast to Indonesia, China and Australia, these periods were remarkably poor in artistic achievement. Obviously one generation does descend from another, but we have no material enabling us to describe, even in the most casual outline, the evolution from pre-historic cultures of Indochina to those found at the dawn of written history, except for the Dong-son culture. Undoubtedly this gap will be filled one day, but for the moment it is best to admit our complete ignorance.

PRE-HISTORY

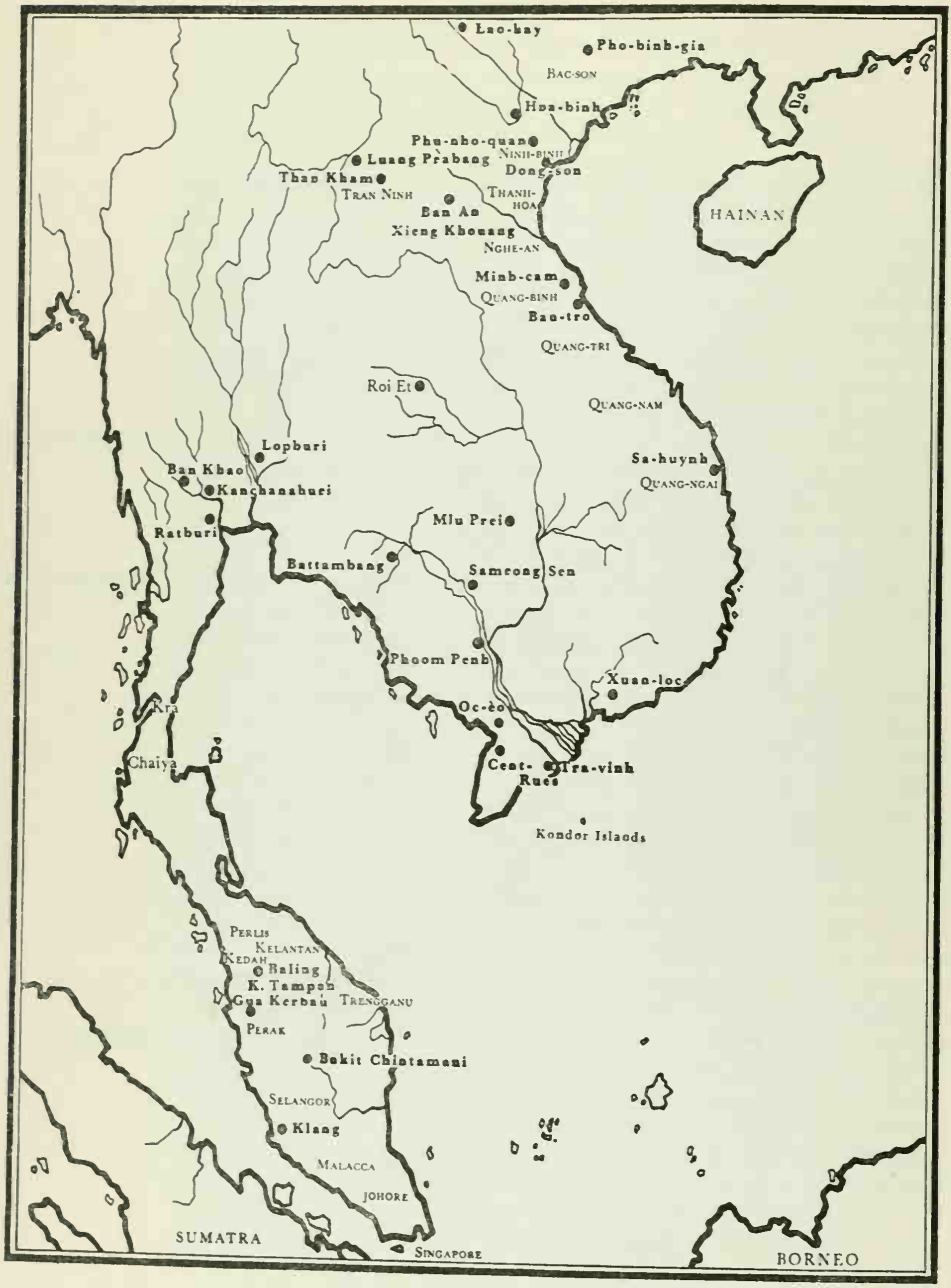
Nevertheless we shall give a very brief sketch of the way in which this part of the world may have come to be peopled, so that we shall have some idea of the origins of the communities later destined to shape the fate of Indochina, and be aware of the main tendencies in their evolution even at this earliest period.

Man's first traces

Throughout the immensely long periods measured by the advance and retreat of the Himalayan ice, somewhere roughly between 600,000 and 12,000 B.C., the whole of South-East Asia including Indonesia apparently developed in isolation from the rest of the continent, no doubt because it was cut off by a belt of ice. On the other hand, Indonesia was on several occasions connected to Malaya, when the level of the China Sea fell as a result of the glaciations. It is legitimate to suppose that men from the islands could then reach the peninsula. At any rate, the very scanty palaeontological evidence which we possess seems to prove only that one branch of the human race developed in this part of the world. This hominid, known as *pithecanthropus robustus* or *modjokertensis,* appears in Java in the early Pleistocene age. By the middle of the Pleistocene age he had slowly evolved into *pithecanthropus erectus* and although it has not yet been possible to associate with the latter the sign of human activity found in the same geological stratum – as in the case with *sinanthropus pekinensis* – the connection seems to be at any rate possible.

Palaeolithic

In any case, the first human tools characteristic of South-East Asia can be placed with some certainty at this same period, the beginning of the middle Pleistocene age. They are ordinary stones, shaped on one side and known as "choppers". These palaeolithic tools have been found at Anyathia in Upper Burma, from which this culture takes its name, and they date from the second interglacial period, so that in date, at least, they are related to the Sohanian culture in Kashmir. Throughout the Middle Pleistocene these choppers continued to be made without improvement, never shaped on both sides, although this latter technique was



PREHISTORIC AND PROTO-HISTORIC INDOCHINA

known in India at this time. Similar choppers of the same date are also found in the Tampanian (from Kota Tampa in Northern Perak) culture in Malaya, and perhaps also in the Fingnoian (from Fing Noi, Kanchanaburi) culture in Siam though the latter is more probably dated to the later Palaeolithic period. It is tempting to see some connection, a parallel at least, between these hominids and the definitely human — almost Neanderthal — *homo soloensis* exemplified in the skulls of Ngandong in Java and dating from the third interglacial period.

Throughout the Late Pleistocene and down to the end of the Ice Age (perhaps about 12,000 B.C.) the choppers seem to change slowly without much improvement, though this impression may be simply the result of our ignorance, for the human population itself seems to develop. Their makers were probably creatures of the same Cromagnard type as *homo wadjakensis* found in association with a mousterian type of culture in Java. It is plausible to suppose that they were the ancestors of the Australian aborigines and of some other racial groups that still survive in Indochina and south eastern Asia, such as the Senoi in Malaya and the Vedda in Ceylon.

MESOLITHIC

The end of the Ice Age may be taken, roughly but conveniently, as marking the arrival on the scene of *homo sapiens,* and the beginning of the Mesolithic period. But the term "Mesolithic" must not be used with the precise connotation proper when talking of European pre-history, for there are already decidedly Neolithic characteristics. The term "Preneolithic" might be better. In any case, somewhere between 12,000 and 8,000 B.C. there is a marked improvement in the choppers, and it seems very likely that new techniques were introduced when ice no longer blocked communications with the rest of Asia.

The final phases of this evolution, the Hoabinian and Bacsonian cultures, lead directly into the true Neolithic period, and they are probably connected with fresh immigrations into the peninsula.

Hoabinian culture

Somewhere between 5,000 and 3,000 B.C., a period for which we begin to have rather more evidence, we find a culture which can only be called Mesolithic, but which does have occasional Neolithic features, such as the partial polishing of edges. It is tempting to connect this advance with the spread, at about this time, of some new arrivals, the Melanesians, who, there are many reasons for thinking, originally came from southern China. They were black, but very different from the African Negroes. These folk are believed to have arrived in two waves. The first comers were small men with very dark skin, and they may have introduced the technique of partial polishing to the Austronesians with whom they clearly mixed. Their artifacts are found in Tonkin on the right bank of the Red river, especially at Hoa-binh whence the culture takes its name, and in Annam (in Thanh-hoa and Quang-binh). Melanesian and Australoid skulls have been found side by side, in the caves of Lang-kao (Hoa-binh), for instance.

These Hoabinians spread throughout Indochina, to Laos (Luang Prabang and Sam Neua), to Siam (Ban Khao) and to Malaya, especially Kelantan and Perak, where the term "Sumatran" is applied to this ancient period in order to emphasize the links with the island.

Bacsonian culture

At almost the same time a second wave of Melanesians spread all over Indochina, again from north to south and they would seem to have founded the Bacsonian culture. This time they were taller people, with a lighter skin and curly hair. There is no doubt about their introducing the technique of partial polishing which is characteristic of their culture, and they too mixed with the Australoids. They were also responsible for the spread of a new type of artifact, which marks the first great step forward in technique; this was the short chopper with double, polished cutting edge. They were familiar too with basket-pottery, and the use of mother-of-pearl and bone. The principal sites excavated are at Bac-son in Tonkin, where many caves with burials were found, Dong-thuoc, Lang-cuom, Pho-binh-gia, Keo-phay and many others. Bacsonian sites are found throughout the peninsula, especially in Malaya, and right out in the furthest parts of Indonesia.

An even more important event seems to have taken place at this time; the arrival of the Indonesian peoples, also from southern China. They eventually supplanted the Australoids and even the Melanesians. Only unimportant pockets of the latter remained in Indochina, such as the Semang in Malaya, whereas together with the Papuans they still form the basis of the population of Melanesia. That, at least, is the impression derived from the excavations. Indonesian skulls are found with Melanesian ones in the caves of Pho-binh-gia and Keo-phay, whereas only Indonesian skulls are found at the higher levels, for example at Phu-nho-quan. The Indonesian must therefore be responsible for the last phase of the Bacsonian culture, and for its progress at that time. Their handsome products are found in Siam (Ratburi and Lopburi), in Laos (Luang Prabang) and in Malaya (Gua Kerbau, in Perak). We cannot yet call these cultures Neolithic, for stone tools of primitive type are still found there, but we are getting close to that age, when the broad lines of race distribution become fixed, no doubt because men are bound to the soil by agriculture.

NEOLITHIC

By and large, about the middle of the 3rd millennium, we find unmistakably Neolithic techniques in use everywhere in the peninsula, and this seems to be connected with a distribution of human communities which has scarcely changed since.

Races of Indochina

The Indonesians who from this time onward form the main ethnic element in the population, can be divided into two waves of invasion, or racial groups. The Proto-malayans, dolichocephalic and strongly built, came first. They are the ancestors of the peoples occupying the plateaux of central Indochina, Jarai and Rhadé. The Dayaks of Borneo and the

Igorots of the Philippines are probably of the same stock. The Deutero-malayans, also dolichocephalic but slit-eyed, were basically of the same stock, but already showed appreciable Mongol characteristics. It would seem that, for the most part, they spread by sea. In any case they occupy all the coastal areas of south-eastern Asia. Their descendants now are the Cham, Malayans and Javanese.

The same Mongol influence, but a more marked one, produced the Thai-Vietnamese group, which in the beginning was certainly one racial stock. Shades of difference developed later, when they inhabited the Blue and Red river basins respectively. Then in the south west of the peninsula waves of Indonesians, mixing with a perhaps stronger Melanesian element, may have formed the Mon-Khmer group which stretches perhaps as far afield as the borders of India.

It is, of course, quite impossible to carry this ethnographical scheme further, and to make a strict correlation between Neolithic artifacts and races. That is all guess work. But one can say that the Neolithic cultures just described do fit in quite well with this ethnographic chronology and further, that the linguists' much more precise classifications confirm the hypothesis.

Languages of Indochina

Generally speaking, the languages of Indochina do go back to a common origin, and the term Austro-asiatic, though much criticised, is convenient in stressing this original unity. Within this unity there are three main linguistic groups roughly corresponding to the physical differentiations already described.

In the north, the unity of Thai and Vietnamese is well established. The Miao-Man language spoken by most of the tribes in the mountains of southern China and upper Tonkin, can also be connected with them. The recently identified "Kadai" languages spoken in the arc of islands from Formosa to Hai-nan provide a link between this group and Malayo-polynesian.

Malayo-polynesian forms the second linguistic group; only its western branch concerns us here. That branch includes Malay proper, Cham, and such Indonesian dialects in Indochina as Jarai and Rhadé.

Between these two extremes, and related to both of them come all the Mon-Khmer languages of the south western bulge of the peninsula. This group includes not only Mon, the ancient language of the deltas of Burma and Siam, and Khmer, the ancestor of modern Cambodian, but also the dialects of some of the mountain peoples in central Indochina, for example, Banhar, and the Semang language of Malaya. It also perhaps embraces, rather more loosely, Palaung and Munda in north eastern India. To complete the picture, we should mention the Tibeto-Burmese languages spoken in the north western corner of the peninsula, at the foot of the Himalayas, though they scarcely concern us here as they are of relatively recent appearance there and of no cultural significance

whatever. It will be seen that the linguistic families fit remarkably well with the mosaic of racial sub-divisions just described, and it would seem that they were all nicely in place at the dawn of the Neolithic period or at any rate at the beginning of written history, since when there have been few if any changes.

Stages of Neolithic culture

There is now evidence enough to follow the progress of Neolithic culture more closely. The first phase, Old Neolithic (somewhere about 2,500 to 2,000 B.C.) has characteristic axeheads with a conical grip and an egg-shaped blade. This type seems to have originated in northern Asia, and to have arrived, in Indochina at least, mainly by overland routes. At the same time, it appears, another culture known by its spearheads and arrows travelled by sea along the islands. Products of the first culture abound in Indochina (especially Mlu-Prei and Samrong Sen, Kompong Thom, Cambodia); the second is hardly known there. Nonetheless it may have been the forerunner of what we know as the Dong-son culture.

The late Neolithic (about 2,000 to 800 B.C.) period scattered throughout Indochina splendid stone tools, beautifully polished and of many shapes. The adze predominates at first, that is a trapezium-shaped tool with the blade at right angles to the handle. Then comes the axe, with the blade in the same plane as the handle. Furnished with a handle and well-polished, this axe seems to be the characteristic tool of agricultural populations. It marks the decisive step forward taken by Neolithic technology. The sites are many, but we are still waiting for the systematic excavation of a large Indochinese Neolithic settlement. It is perhaps significant that we hardly find any such Neolithic sites in Tonkin, whose culture remained Hoabinian and Bacsonian, but many more on the coasts of Annam and Malaya, and by the Cambodian lakes. So it would seem that man was beginning to come down to the lowlands and the wide open spaces. Some of the sites are: Sa-huynh (Quang-ngai) in Annam, with many others at Quang-binh; Samrong Sen in Cambodia, one of the biggest sites in South East Asia; the recently identified sites in the valleys of the Kwei Noi and Kwei Yei in Siam and the fine deposits by the banks of the Tembeling in Malaya where investigations into pre-history are more advanced; there are also sites at Baling in Kedah, Gua Cha and Gua Musang in Kelantan and Tengku Lembu in Perlis. With these last sites we should no doubt connect the tools of Poulo Condore, which are not very well known.

EARLY HISTORIC TIMES

The transition from Neolithic to Bronze Age in Indochina is, like that from Mesolithic to Neolithic impossible to pinpoint. Metal appears suddenly, clear proof that it came from abroad, in the midst of civilisations that remained imperturbably Neolithic, and were to remain so for centuries. This is characteristic of the Indochinese melting-pot where, in general, every great advance comes from outside and has to wait some time before it is adopted, but once assimilated, completely transforms the ancient order.

Figure holding a staff, perhaps the support of a lamp? Tomb no. 1 at Dong-tac, Dongson; 2nd century B.C.? *Bronze. Height 0,17 m. Guimet Museum, Paris.*

Bronze, certainly imported from China (though in Burma and Malaya an Indian source is possible) appears towards the beginning of the first millennium in all the Neolithic sites in the peninsula. But it hardly takes pride of place until the 6th century B.C. which may therefore be taken as the beginning of the Bronze Age and of Early History.

In this context Samrong Sen, at the southern extremity of the great Cambodian lakes, is the most interesting site. There stone implements were used, and moreover constantly improved, as long as the site was inhabited. There were many shapes of axeheads, hatchets, chisels and other tools. Other materials, such as wood and bone, were also used. Finally there was pottery with some splendid incised designs. But at the same time the inhabitants used, and even worked, bronze. Some of the decorative designs seem to point to influence from the Dong-son culture, and this is also true of the pottery found at Sa-huynh in Annam, which only shows how difficult it is to draw hard and fast lines.

The Bronze Age

Then, about the middle of the first millennium B.C. we find two widespread types of Bronze Age culture. One, that of Dong-son, can be clearly defined. The other, the Megalithic culture, is still only a promising hypothesis inadequately studied. They respectively filled the great sectors into which Indochina was ever afterwards to be divided; the seaboard and the continental basin of the Mekong.

The Megalithic culture

Along the edge of the highlands, from Tran-ninh to the Moi tableland overlooking the Mekong delta in the south, and as far as the Roi Et plateau in the west, we find a chain of probably inter-related megalithic monuments. These, in their turn, form but part of a vast megalithic complex stretching from India to Sumatra, by way of Malaya (Perak especially).

Another series of ancient works has also been observed in the same area. They are generally round and consist of an earth wall surrounded by a ditch. They have only been counted from the air, and no systematic excavations have been undertaken to determine their function or date. Some may have been fortified settlements. Others, with roads, radiating away from them in all directions, may well have been burial places.

The megalithic monuments proper; the urns, dolmens and menhirs of Laos, Annam and Malaya, were certainly funerary in purpose. The same is true of the curious cist found at Xuan-loc, Bien-hoa, in Cochin China. Of these the urns are the best known for they have been found in thousands in huge cemetries, especially in Tran Ninh and Xieng Khouang (Laos). Made of white sandstone, they were three to ten feet high, and often covered with a round lid. They served as tombs; human ashes were placed inside or, more often, in earthenware vessels at their feet, and surrounded by all manner of funeral furniture. Some of the urns were decorated, for instance with the carved shape of some crawling feline animal.

Unfortunately we know nothing about the peoples who erected these

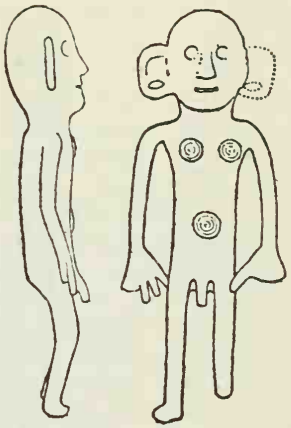


Fig. 1 — *Statuette, Thao Kham, Laos. Vat Phra Kèo Museum, Vientiane. Bronze. Height 0,08 m.*

monuments, nor about the succeeding stages of their civilisation. Simply because of their geographical distribution, it is tempting to connect megaliths and earthworks, and to regard the former as the tombs, and the latter as the dwelling places, of agricultural people inhabiting the edges of the deltas and the valleys. This inland culture peculiar to the western side of Indochina and the axis of the Mekong, would then correspond to the area occupied by the Mon-Khmer peoples. This however, can only be put forward as a working hypothesis which must be treated with caution.

Moreover, it would seem unlikely that this cultural complex could develop so near the brilliant Dong-son civilisation of the coastal strip without coming into contact with it. We have already mentioned that Samrong Sen, which probably shared in the origin of this megalithic civilisation and Sa-huynh, which was not far removed from it, both show the influence of Dong-son. Near some urns at Bang An in Tra Ninh, bronze bells have been found exactly like others from Samrong Sen, and completely in Dong-son style. The two cultures must therefore have been closely linked, and this gives us a clue to the date of the urns in the fields in Tran Ninh, if the analogy with Dong-son holds, and it is somewhere between the 5th and 1st centuries B.C. Fig. 1

Available evidence does not allow us to carry the arguments further. One point, however, is worth stressing. These urns are among the first examples of anything that can strictly be called art, that is to say the plastic expression of the beliefs and way of life of a society.

Dong-son culture

When it comes to the Dong-son culture, we have enough material to venture a little further into the realm of hypothesis. We can define it as

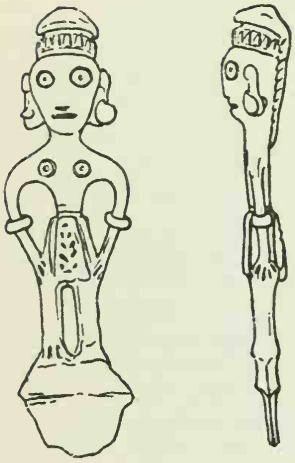


FIG. 2 — *Dagger hilt, Son-tay, Tonkin. Hanoi Museum. Bronze. Height 0,085 m.*

the culture of the Indonesian peoples of the coastal belt of Annam, developing and expanding remarkably between the 5th and 2nd centuries B.C. The town of Dong-son, from which it takes its name, is near Thanh-hoa; the site has been excavated and has yielded abundant material.

The Dong-son people were skilled agriculturalists; they grew rice and kept buffaloes and pigs. We can easily imagine them in their large huts, close to the sea or river, which were built on stilts to keep them clear at high water and had overhanging saddle roofs. They were also, skilled fishermen and bold sailors, whose long dug-out canoes traversed all the China sea and some of the waters further south. This explains both the wealth of their culture and its expansion.

Origin and evolution of Dong-son civilisation

There is every reason to believe that the upsurge of Dong-son civilisation was primarily due to the evolution of the Indonesian peoples who were becoming more and more solidly settled agriculturalists. However, it must be admitted that foreign influences played a continually increasing role, especially in technology and the arts.

Sources have been sought in the west, and some people have even wanted to regard the Dong-sonians as "pontic peoples" who arrived via central Asia and as identical with the Yue-tche barbarians who appeared in south-west China in the 8th century B.C. These ideas like the relationship formerly suggested with the Halstatt culture, cannot be substantiated. No doubt certain bronzes of Yun-nan are reminiscent of Dong-son; but it would still have to be proved that these are "pontic" products, or at any rate, earlier. For their date will decide whether they can be regarded as models for Dong-son or, on the contrary imitations, which would explain the spread of Dong-son towards upper Burma.

In fact the principal sources of Dong-son progress are clearly to be found in China, which was then flourishing particularly as at that time Chinese colonisation was spreading down to the borders of present-day Tonkin. An analysis of Dong-son decorative motifs shows that the models were

Chinese bronzes of the Warring States. There lies the principal source of Dong-son art, which would thus have flourished between the 5th and 2nd centuries, for the Hans are responsible for the end of this art with the conquest of Tonkin in 111 B.C. It should also be noted that, except for the Yun-nan bronzes mentioned above and a few finds in the regions of Lao-kay and Yen-bay, Dong-son proper is the most northern point at which this art flourished, although it spread, as we shall see, a long way south. While the Dong-son aesthetic disappears completely, or almost completely beneath Chinese culture, it seems to lie at the origin, at least in part, of the art of southern Indochina, especially Cham art. We are then led to wonder whether Dong-son art, quite contrary to the view which attributes it to people who came down from the north-west, is not essentially the product of Indonesian ideas fertilized in Annam by first contacts with China. It would then have finally disappeared under the voracious colonisation of their conquerors and the Thai-Vietnamese people who formed the advance guard of the Chinese.

Finally, people have recognized, reasonably this time, a wave of Hellenistic echoes in the last stage of Dong-son art and the transmission of these influences has again been linked with "pontic" emigrations. This hypothesis is quite untenable because we are perfectly familiar with the origin of these models and can follow them step by step. They arrived from the south and Fu-nan, the first great Indianized kingdom, the birth of which we shall look at in a moment. In any case, far from being one of the sources of Dong-son art, these influences are only felt towards its decline and by that time it had already become more than half Chinese, or, if you prefer, Vietnamese.

Dong-son art

The archaeological material from the Dong-son period is very rich, comprising both religious and funerary objects, utensils and weapons; axe-heads, spearheads and swords; tripods, cauldrons and bowls; pottery vessels of many forms, weights for weavers and fishermen, finally orna-

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

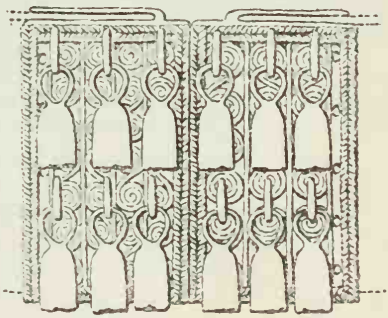


Fig. 3 — *Belt buckle decorated with bells, Dong-son. Hanoi Museum. Height 0,057 m.*

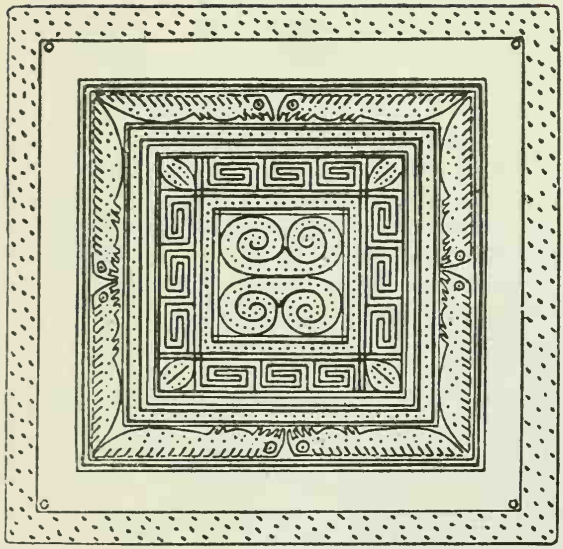


FIG. 4 — *Protective plaque, Dong-son. Hanoi Museum. Bronze. Height 0,16 m.*

ments, bracelets of bone and mother-of-pearl, glass beads and many other
FIG. 4 things. Most of these objects especially those of bronze, are decorated, often sumptuously. Geometrical stylisation is the most characteristic feature of this art. There are flecks, hatching, triangles, and especially spirals either free flowing or enclosed in tangental lines. Then, when it comes to the representation of figures, their power of expression is as striking as their sense of style. The best known works are big bronze drums. Their Chinese origin or at any rate inspiration, has been rightly emphasised. They are absolutely exceptional, both for the point of vue of
FIG. 5 technique and that of decoration. One of the finest is the drum of Ngoc-lu, now in Hanoi museum. Attention has recently been drawn to the bronze
PLATE P. 29 figures often found in tombs of the last Dong-son period. They are lamp carriers such as the famous figures from grave 3 at Lach-truong and from
FIG. 8 grave 1 at Dong-tac. They reflect an art both strong in design and skilled in the refinement of certain details.

With these we are probably at the end of Dong-son art proper, on the edge of the Christian era perhaps, when Chinese influences make themselves felt more strongly. They could therefore almost as properly be studied in conjunction with the beginnings of Vietnamese art, which we shall look at in a moment.

Dong-son Religion

These works allow us to form a fairly precise idea of the cycle of Dong-son

beliefs, if we also cautiously take into account the evidence gathered by ethnographers among contemporary Indonesian peoples, who are still so near the Dong-son stage of civilisation.

The great bronze drums, sometimes called "rain drums" are important in this respect. Some of them are decorated with scenes from human life. One sees "magicians" disguised as deer, probably derived from a similar theme found in China and in the art of the steppes. Such figures may be connected with hunting rites, but there are other symbols, frequent on the drums, which are connected rather with agriculture: the sun and frogs, which symbolised water. The drum itself was part of this cycle, for it was beaten by way of sympathetic magic, in imitation of the thunder which heralded the welcome rain. FIG. 6

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On the drums, too, which were frequently placed in tombs, we see splendid boats laden with figures dressed in feathers. Probably they represent souls embarking for the Land of the Blessed, situated somewhere beyond the eastern horizon of the great ocean. We know that, in contemporary belief, the soul is often likened to a bird, and that the Shamans, who must have been the Dong-son "priests", dress as birds in order to fly to the land of the dead, where they learn of future events. It is also worth noting that some of the bronze drums were found among the Muong of Tonkin, who were still using them at the beginning of the 20th century in funeral rites. Thus these works of art, which are remarkable both for technical and aesthetic reasons, reflected on their sides the whole cycle of Dong-son life, from hunting and agriculture, the essential bases of life, to what happened after death. FIG. 7

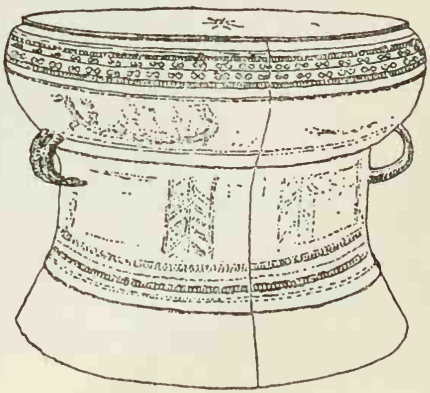


FIG. 5 — *Drum from Ngoc-lu, Tonkin. Hanoi Museum. Bronze. Diameter 0,87 m.*

Urn with geometric and animal decoration, found at Phnom Penh, Kandal, Cambodia. 4th century A.D.?
Bronze. Height 0,35 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.

The wealth of funeral furniture bears witness to the elaborate nature of the rituals accompanying death, which was regarded as a transitory state. The deceased was surrounded with everyday objects, so that he could live a normal life in the tomb. Later on, for reasons of economy, he was provided with small models of his earthly possessions instead of the possessions themselves, but the models at least he had to have. Finally, in the last phase of Dong-son art, new rituals appear. Until then the tomb had been a simple wooden coffin buried in the ground; now, in the so-called Lach-truong period, which began in the first century B.C., we find brick tombs in the shape of a tunnel, or rather a cave, divided into three chambers by arches. There has been an attempt to connect these arrangements with Hellenistic eschatological beliefs. Such a connection seems extremely unlikely; it is simpler to see in them the continually growing influence of Chinese ideas, according to which the dead take refuge in caves hollowed out of the sides of the Holy Mountain, the abode of the Immortals. The tunnel-tomb may well be a sort of reconstruction of these mystic caves. The coffin rested in the central chamber; one of the neighbouring compartments held the offerings — the dead man's food — and the third chamber served as an altar. In this chamber shone like the flame of life the lamps carried or guarded by bronze figures, which we have already studied from the aesthetic point of view. No doubt it would be more logical to discuss these arrangements in connection with the beginnings of Vietnamese art, but the style of the "lamp-bearers" is quite dong-sonian enough to justify me in mentioning them here. It may be noted in passing that here we find traces of those Hellenistic influences which mark, as we have already seen, the end of Dong-son art proper.

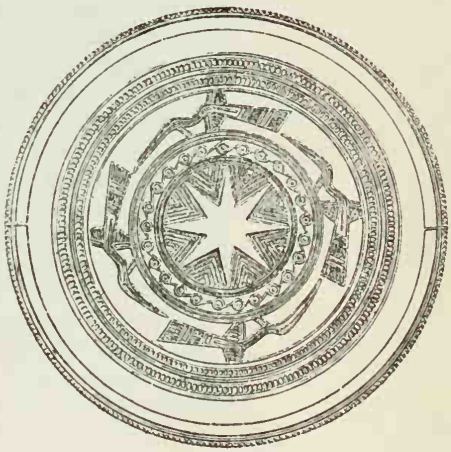


FIG. 6 — *Ornament on a drum, Dong-son*
Hanoi Museum. Bronze. Diameter 0,27 m.

FIG. 7. — *Funeral ship; detail from the drum from Ngoc-lu, Tonkin. Hanoi Museum. Bronze. See fig. 5.*

The diffusion Dong-son art

As we have said, Dong-son is the most northerly site which has produced examples of the art which has taken its name. On the other hand, numerous works of art reflecting the same spirit have been found in the south of the peninsula and in the Malay archipelago. So when we speak of the "diffusion" of Dong-son art, we are simply following the distribution of the archaeological remains from the richest sites — which may be merely the best-explored ones — to the chance discoveries. It would be wrong to assume that this was the real or only direction in which this culture expanded, for it seems fairly certain that it was the product of all the Indonesian peoples all over this area. However, our account follows one fundamental characteristic: the clear influence of China.

The volume in this series devoted to Indonesia has already described this period in the Malay archipelago. There remains little to be said about southern Indochina where finds have been few and far between and systematic excavations have still to be carried out. The reader should simply be reminded of the numerous objects very much in the Dong-son style — particularly bells and tool-handles — which have been found in the plain of Jarres and at Samrong Sen. The most important articles are the big

PLATE P. 36

bronze bells from Samrong (Battambang) in Cambodia and from the River Tembeling (Pahang) and Klang (Selangor) in Malaya. These things could have been found at Dong-son itself without provoking any particular comment. On the other hand a special place is reserved for the splendid bronze urns, decorated with geometrical designs and animals, from Cambodia (Phnom Penh region; now in the Musée National), Sumatra and Madura (now in the museum at Djakarta). Although they are Dong-son in spirit, they also have characters of their own. Since certain details — the animals, for example — seem to indicate a southern origin, one is tempted to see in them southern Indonesian variations on contemporary Dong-son art. Moreover, the beauty and refinement of these urns show that these

FIG. 8 — *Reconstruction of the lampholder in tomb No. 3 at Lachtruong, Dong-son. Hanoi Museum, Bronze. Height 0,33 m.*

peoples were at least as talented as those of the north, a deduction confirmed in any case by the glorious sculpture which they produced later on.

This brief sketch possesses at any rate the merit of introducing and situating the peoples of Indochina. During the two thousand years which will bring me down to the present there will be no more great migrations to record; only the expansion of one group at the expense of another. From now on we shall be studying the struggles between civilisations in Indochina and their individual evolutions.

It has already been possible to discern some of the interactions between man and nature in the peninsula. The physical structure of Indochina makes itself felt by splitting men up into small groups as well as isolating them from the rest of the continent of Asia. Yet openings exist — towards the sea. That is where Indochina played an essential role. From this land successive waves of men — Australoids, Melanesians, Indonesians, Mongolians — spread out to the islands. Even if man appeared in the first place in Java, it remains true that Indochina was the reservoir which populated and civilised the southern Pacific.

On a more detailed scale, we have also seen that man very soon showed a tendency to settle either on the coast, or on land that had once been under water — on the edges of valley and then of deltas. He needed the lessons learnt in China and India to enable him to progress any further. Basically, this was the essential difference between proto-history and history: the transition, by a huge technical leap, from an economy of survival to an economy of subsistence and later of production.

The complex wealth of the Dong-son civilisation enables us to forecast this evolution. There can be no doubt that the civilisation of Indochina had attained a considerable degree of perfection by the time that, thanks

to China and then to India, we can start to read their history. Because our sources are unilateral we are liable to note only these contributions from abroad. We are certainly bound to pay attention to the facts which we possess, but we must not forget that they are only fragmentary and not even necessarily representative. However, to go beyond them would be both dangerous and illusory. To look, as people have tried to do, in the megalithic civilisation for the direct ancestor of the Khmer civilisation, which is supposed to draw certain characteristics like the mountain-temple from it, is only to make a dubious guess. All we can do is to admit our ignorance and hope that it will not last for ever.

One thing is certain. During the Bronze Age Indochina witnessed the development of a civilisation of remarkable vitality. This elaborate social organization made it possible for China and India to exert their beneficial influences.

The most vital seed needs soil in which to germinate. The lessons provided by India and China would not have been heard on shores that were deserted or merely hostile. The truth of this is easily demonstrated. We know very well that Indian and Chinese sailors touched Borneo, the Philippines, Hai-nan and Celebes. But these shores do not possess civilisations that could ever be compared to those of the Chams and Khmers; they did not lend themselves to it; their inhabitants were not well enough organized. On the other hand, Indochina, with its big natural units, which were favourable to human enterprises, and its already highly developed peoples, provided an ideal site on which the two greatest civilisations of ancient Asia were able to exercise all their beneficial influence.

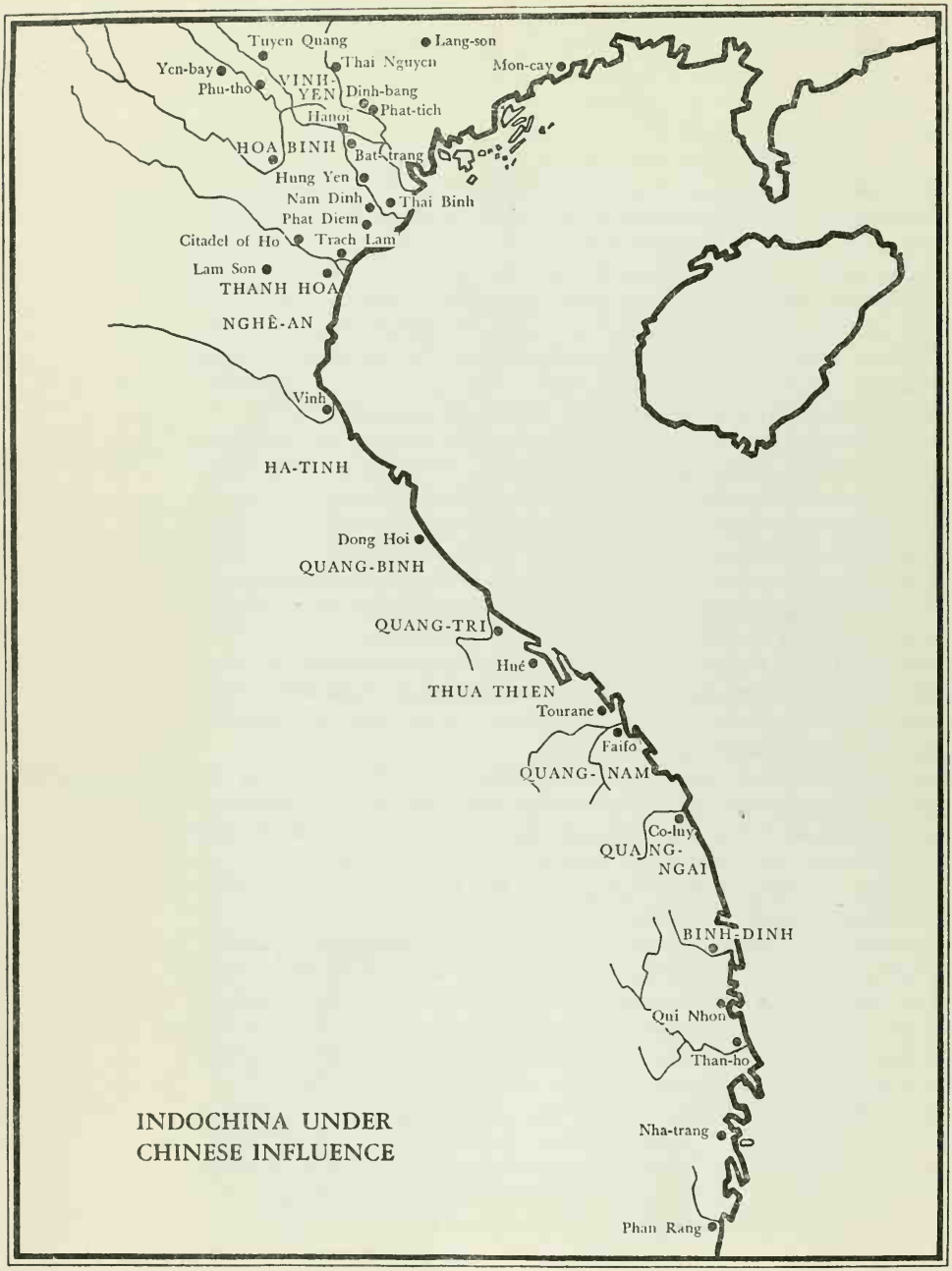
II. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHINA AND INDIA: THE BIRTH OF INDOCHINA

The most important phenomena at the beginning of the Christian era, phenomena which were to decide the whole future of Indochina, were the arrival first of Chinese and then of Indians with all the influence they were to exercise on these shores. Written history begins at this time, since both Chinese and Indian writers began to take an interest in their neighbour, and from this time forth there are more and more numerous inscriptions and monuments in Indochina itself; for the natives of the peninsula imitated their masters, and found how to write their own languages, and to create works of art peculiarly their own.

But the contrast between the methods and effects of these two influences is most striking. China quite simply conquered and annexed Tonkin, making a clean slate of the past to impose her civilisation, and finally turn the country into one of her provinces; a province scarcely recognisable as distinct from others in her vast empire. Whereas India only touched on the southern coasts of Indochina, and vanished again from the scene, when her sea-faring activity practically came to an end in about the 5th century A.D. But in that short space of time the peoples thus drawn out of their isolation, on their own initiative took over her culture, and very soon in turn created new civilisations of profound originality. China dominated, while India scattered seed, and between them they were to shape the double aspect of Indochina.

THE CHINESE CONQUEST

Vietnamese tradition, written down late, but nonetheless recording the broad outlines of the nation's evolution, describes two half-legendary kingdoms at the dawn of history, and the story of these kingdoms well illustrates how the country was formed. The first was the kingdom of Xich-quy, stretching to the north as far as the Blue River, and there the Vietnamese isolated themselves away from that part of the Indonesian stock which was becoming more and more Mongolised. In actual history the Chinese, using the word strictly, came down in numbers towards the south, just as their population and civilisation expanded along the valleys of the Yellow River and Yang tse-kiang. Shortly afterwards, about the Dong-son period, the kingdom of Van-lang was established with its centre in modern Tonkin, and it may even at that date have been purely Vietnamese. Then comes the first historic reign, that of An-Duong-Vuong from 257 to 208 B.C. ruling the kingdom of Au-Lac whose capital, Co-loa (Phuc-yen) has been found. There a huge earthwork surrounds the imposing ruins not yet excavated. Probably the civilisation there was Dong-sonian already strongly influenced by China. For in 214 B.C. Ch'in Shih-huang-ti,



INDOCHINA UNDER CHINESE INFLUENCE

the unifier of the Chinese mainland, had conquered the north of modern Tonkin and established three military districts, marches of the Empire there. Finally in 111 B.C., general Lu-Po-to destroyed all traces of Vietnamese rule, and Tonkin was incorporated in a vast province with its capital at Canton. In spite of rebellions with some temporary success, such as that of the Trung sisters in the years 39–43 A.D. and that of Ly-bon in 544 A.D. Tonkin was to remain a Chinese province down to 938 A.D.

Assimilation to China

The Chinese dominated Vietnam; moreover they made it their own country. Such as process of assimilation had already occurred in China itself, when men from the north spread like drops of oil round Canton, and absorbed the Proto-Thai and Proto-Vietnamese indigenous populations. It was therefore essentially just one more step in a continuous process, and owed its success to experience gained before, and, above all, to the overwhelming superiority of the Chinese culture.

The country was organised in Chinese fashion, with province, region and district as the administrative divisions. In them authority, even the highest, was often entrusted to natives, though they exercised their authority in accordance with the Chinese codes for all power originated from the emperor, who was the supreme ruler. Chinese, with its ideograms, became the official language, and was the first form of writing the people had known. The Vietnamese absorbed all this so well that soon they were coming out high in the official examinations, and from Former Han times produced noted men of letters. As the written language is the mould of all thought, and the necessary vehicle of all knowledge, the impression made by China was so deep that it still remained vital at the beginning of the 19th century.

The other fundamental advance was the conquest of the delta. Whereas the Dong-son people had had to be content with the coastal plains, or with lands emerging above the river level in the delta but always subject to capricious floods, the Chinese, using their proved techniques, enclosed the streams in dikes patiently built, and created permanent rice-fields in series to control the water, and make intensive agriculture possible. Their method was to establish little colonies of soldiers, as the Romans did, who, under protection from a fort, worked the fields around. Little by little the natives clustered round these model farms, imitated them, and accepted the rule of the Chinese. In this way Chinese civilisation spread as much by example as by war, *ense et aratro* (by sword and plough) just as Roman civilisation steadily brought Europe under its sway.

This mode of life ties a man irrevocably to the way he exploits the soil. As soon as his efforts relax, the river breaks its dikes and flows back into its old bed, with all the more violence, the more it has been restrained. Apart from that one way, there are no other possibilities of exploiting the Tonkin's delta. Having conquered the soil the peasant became its prisoner. Even today there is a limit to the cultivated land of Vietnam

at a little more than 60 feet above sea level. The division of permanent fields was the origin of the Vietnamese village, a complete unit in itself, capable of providing all its subsistence from its own resources. In course of time specialisation began, and a village would become skilled in craftsmanship or trade, serving other purely agricultural villages. Nonetheless it remained the basic unit, communally ruled and jealously autonomous. Quite naturally the worship of the guardian spirits of the soil, the source of all life, was the essential rite for these communities, and beyond this purely local religion loomed but vaguely the Confucian concept of the Emperor as intermediary with Heaven, and centre of the Cosmic order. Indeed too these little scattered autonomous societies were gathered up by the administrative hierarchy into a pyramid theoretically culminating in the Emperor, the supreme ruler. But with the slightest relaxation of the central power, the country fell to pieces, without however great harm; for each of the pieces was able to manage on its own. As a result there was no nation in the political sense, and, to a less extent, no common civilisation. But the advantages were just as important; intense vitality and an incredible power of expansion.

The history of Vietnam is not a story of dynasties or great surges of ideas. It is rather that of a people winning its land. Never tiring, the nation pushed forward new cells along every plain, and into every pocket of land propitious to its mode of agriculture. These cells, like so many centres of infection, supported at need by the soldiers of the central power, multiplied, and in the end covered the new land, so that it was almost automatically assimilated, thus aggrandising the Empire of Annam.

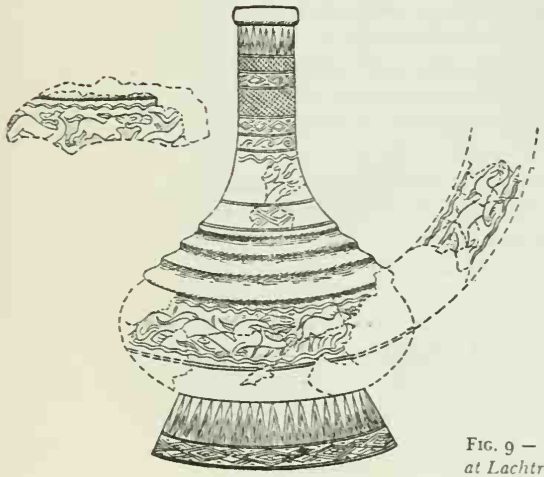


FIG. 9 — *Bronze vase with raised ornament. Tomb No. 3 at Lachtruong, Dong-son. Hanoi Museum. Height 0,25 m.*

Unity was built up out of a multitude of little communities, politically independent, but socially homogeneous, and slowly, like polyps gradually forming a vast encircling atoll, these communities surrounded the backward tribes left isolated on their mountains.

Chinese art in Tonkin

The particular form which the assimilation to Chinese culture took in Tonkin, and the fact that it was not an exceptionally rich country, resulted in the land remaining a poor province, far to the south, and without great influence on the general evolution of the Chinese world. Moreover, being shut in by its mountains, and only opening on the wider world through a narrow bay, it was not of great interest to the Han, and later the T'ang, emperors who were more bent on expanding over central Asia and Korea. So contrary to other provinces recently conquered, but better situated, Tonkin, without much splendour, kept its modest place as a march on the edge of barbarian lands. A march because Chinese power was long held at bay by the Cham to the south, the Cham being then at the height of their power, and the brilliant creators of an original civilisation. Moreover the assimilation to China was so complete that it effaced all the achievements of the previous culture and, in particular, the very individual contribution of Dong-son. For the techniques and the arts of China were so much more advanced that they simply obliterated all that had gone before. So it is no surprise to find at Tonkin down to the 10th century works which are completely Chinese in spirit and taste, being no more than servile provincial imitations of the magnificent phases of Chinese art as they succeeded one another. Moreover the land was too poor to encourage any extravagance, so that there was nothing but modest provincial art and not even a distinct regional school worth discussing in detail.

Anyhow we have little to go on. We only know the artifacts excavated from the tombs at such places as Lim, in the Nghi-ve and in Bac-ninh province, or in the Vinh-yen province at Lac-y specially. Most of these date back to the Later Han dynasty (25—220 A.D.), but there are some from the T'ang and Sung dynasties. The tombs generally follow the usual Chinese pattern, with from one to three vaulted chambers built of bricks which are sometimes stamped with interesting geometric designs, and covered by a tumulus; there is an extra room placed transversally and serving as a chapel. The whole is orientated in accordance with subtle calculations of the geomancers to give the dead man the benefit of favourable earth currents. The goods buried with him are those of the everyday life which he hopes to prolong in the hereafter; clothes and jewels (especially rings and beads of semi-precious stones), weapons, mirrors, and all the utensils needed for his food. The pottery vessels are generally hard to distinguish from those actually made in China, though they mostly lack the wonderful iridescent glazes and the understanding of shape in which Han and T'ang potters were pre-eminent. The most

MAP P. 42

FIG. 9

interesting objects are the delightful little models of houses, which show all the details of a Tonkinese farm of the period, including the pigsty, rice mill, dovecot and oven, but they are of greater historic than aesthetic interest. Only certain bronze or pottery vessels, especially the tripods with spouts in the shape of cock or peacock, have some originality and perhaps derive from the Dong-son tradition.

It is in the field of ceramics that the Vietnamese did finally evolve a distinctive style, though it could never rival the wonderful individuality of the potters of Korea or Ssechuan. From the time of the Chinese conquest, there were certainly kilns at Tonkin working to satisfy local needs. They never went out of production, nor forgot the techniques learnt. Later, as we shall see, under the T'ang and Sung they produced some really beautiful pots, which are the only notable Vietnamese contribution to the fabulous world of Chinese art.

Importance of assimilation to China

So, perhaps just because it was so swift and complete, this assimilation of Tonkin to China had, by and large, but one result, the enlargement of the Middle Kingdom. It is however important as sowing the seeds of the development of the whole of Indochina.

At first Chinese influence seemed to stay limited to the smallest and most northern delta of Indochina. But it planted a higher civilisation there, and shaped a determined people. Gradually and insidiously, but also irresistibly, the Vietnamese bearers of Chinese civilisation were to permeate the whole peninsula, assimilating and obliterating the Indianised communities as effectively as they themselves had been assimilated. By the beginning of the 20th century this slow ferment, helped now by knowledge of European techniques, started to infect even Cambodia. Hence it was the Chinese conquest of the north which made it the chief starting off place for that "drive to the South", whose importance we have already emphasized.

The Chinese conquest also influenced, directly and immediately, the destinies of all the new civilisations then taking shape in Indochina. It is often said that the peninsula owed much of its prosperity to its position as a staging post on the way between India and China. This is based on the assumption that there had long been sea trade between the two countries, and we do not think that was so, in spite of the flowering of Dong-son civilisation. It is more likely that the opposite happened, and that India and China, having met in Indochina, came to see the advantages of the sea route, and to make use of their new point of contact as a convenient stage thereon.

On that hypothesis the conquest of Tonkin was the first and maybe also the essential step. Moreover it put the finishing touches to the assimilation of southern China itself. And it was only when the Chinese were firmly planted in the Canton district with it thousand inviting ports, that this hitherto land-loving folk began to sail the southern seas. It is therefore

reasonable to suggest that their influence may have been felt beyond Tonkin all over the peninsula. It is tempting to suggest that even the Indianised communities may have learnt some techniques of bronze founding and pottery making from the Chinese, though this possibility has not yet received much attention. It may also be that the Chinese belief which makes the Emperor the centre of the universe, influenced the ideas current in Fu-nan in their first formative stage. In any case the parallel is striking.

Tonkin very early became an important centre of the Buddhist faith. The first Buddhists to arrive were Chinese fleeing from the political troubles of the time of the Three Kingdoms. Then came monks from Sogdiana. So Buddhism was established in Vietnam in the third and fourth centuries, and it prospered there. In about the year 580 the monk Vinitaruci founded a famous Dhyana (Zen) school at Bac-ninh. At about the same time a continuous stream of Chinese pilgrims began to set out for the holy Buddhist places of India. Tonkin, known for its faith and part of their world, was a first stage on the journey. So they gladly chose that way round, and were thus led next to touch on the Indianised coasts of Indochina. Others pilgrims went down by Bhamo through Burma, in the process establishing an important centre of Mahayana Buddhism in Yunnan. Yunnan itself had some contact with Tonkin. This whole movement was very important in the development of Indochina. And just because we happen to have no information about the Buddhist art of Tonkin at this, date, we should not forget the possibility that it may have influenced Buddhist art elsewhere in Indochina at that time, especially the art of Champa.

INDIAN EXPANSION

Unlike the Chinese conquest, Indian influence spread peacefully, unplanned, almost unintentionally, and without any direct effect on India herself. But paradoxically it bore splendid fruit in the shape of a garland of Indianised states along the southern coasts of Indochina and in Indonesia, states which flourished for more than fifteen centuries. It was one of the most important civilising movements of ancient times, worthy to compare with the Hellenisation of the Mediterranean world. And India can be justly proud to have spread the light of her understanding over such distants lands, lands which without her might have remained in darkness.

Causes of Indian expansion

Relying more on archaeological evidence than on written history, we find that from the first century A.D. the Indians began to sail along the southern shores of Asia, venturing as far as the distant Sunda Islands. Works of art were found all along their way and, more significantly, all the cultures coming to birth thereabouts show indelible traces of Indian influence. Just why that should have happened has long been obscure, for nothing in the written sources seems to explain it.

It has been suggested that at this time there were invasions from the north

west of Asia which overthrew the established order in India, or that pressure of population made mass emigration necessary. Such theories both entirely misunderstand the state of India, and show no knowledge of the technical possibilities of transplanting masses of men. It is quite possible that some dethroned prince or adventurous warrior might have gone, with a handful of men, to seek his fortune beyond the seas. But it is not conceivable that, with the frail ships of that age and the difficulties of navigation to be mentioned later, mass emigration could have been a solution for overpopulation, even supposing that that problem existed and that solution was contemplated.

Buddhist missionaries are also believed to have been the vehicle of this expansion, and that is very likely to be at least partly true. Being a universal philosophy bent on liberating all beings, and not tied to caste or race, Buddhism was from the beginning an eagerly proselytising force. It passed both over the salt sea and over the sandy seas of central Asia. We know that in the early centuries A.D. it had exceptional success along the south eastern coast of India, as witness, the impressive ruins of Amaravatii and Najarjunikonda, and again, still further away, the temples of Ceylon. Since most of the Indians who embarked for south eastern Asia, came from just that region, it is reasonable to suppose that they were largely Buddhists, and that they would naturally spread their beliefs. One fact at least is certain; from early days Indian sailors worshipped Buddha Dipankara who protected them from the perils of the sea. With this double reason for piety, should not these sailors have proved good missionaries?

But it is carrying the argument too far to assert that only the Buddhists, freed from the stifling bands of caste and all the strict Brahmanic rules, were alone free to go abroad, while that was forbidden to the Hindus. For Brahmanic rules had not then the strictness developed later and which, incidentally, people often exaggerate. And anyhow, rules or no rules, it was not like that, for we shall find that throughout south east Asia Brahmin teaching was absorbed as much, perhaps more, than Buddhist. The main reason for Indian expansion was a more prosaic one, trade. And recent archaeological discoveries in India provide some detailed information about it. From Ptolemaic times Alexandria had been in constant touch with Hither Asia, and so the Mediterranean world knew of the wealth and spices of the Orient, the pearls and perfumes, silk and precious stones, myrrh and incense, and all the treasures of the Queen of Sheba about which the West had only dreamt before. When from the time of Augustus the Romans came to hold the door to these wonders, the demand therefor reached frantic proportions. For only a few decades earlier a better understanding of the monsoons had made the journey to the shores of India safe and punctual. So a brisk trade arose between the Roman Middle East and India, especially the Tamil country with

its huge ports bulging with merchandise (cloth, dyes, pearls etc). The best known is Arikamedu, but Kaveripatinam, Musiris, Tamralipti and others were also important, not to mention the provinces of north west India, Hellenised since Alexander, which played their part in this traffic too.

But luxurious and fastidious Rome desired, even more than Indian manufactures, those exotic products which were rare in India herself, and which had long been the prizes sought by sea traders; gold was in even greater demand, and so were the precious stones whose mines in India were beginning to run out; and cinnamon, pepper, cloves, cardamom, rhinoceros horn and ivory. All these "spices" in short for whose sake, when the Turks barred the way fifteen hundred years later, the Europeans were to seek routes across America and round Africa.

Forms of Indian expansion

Good traders as they were (though the stereotype of mystical India only bent on renunciation sometimes makes us forget this) and equally skilled sailors, the Indians went to look for these things which could be sold for good gold stamped with the heads of Cæsars, and sold at such good prices that Pliny the Elder was to bewail this loss of blood inflicted on the Roman economy. But the sea journey had to be regulated by the monsoons. Going out with the south west monsoon, it was necessary to wait for that of the north east to return. The goods sought were rare, and to get together a cargo justifying the risks of the voyage, patience was needed. The traders would land on an unknown and deserted, or almost deserted, shore, and would have to force their way through thick vegetation to reach the nearest inhabitants dwelling on higher land. They then had to placate these, to make their desires known, and to make payment with things that were wanted. All this was a work of years.

So in the end the Indians were constrained to establish factories for this slow and difficult trade. And being Indians they naturally brought the whole of their Indian way of life along with them. In the first place they had to survive until the next monsoon. But they could not carry food supplies over long distances in the stuffy holds of their slow-sailing ships. They therefore planted rice fields in the fruitful soil of the deltas where they landed, disposing the fields with all their skill and experience of drainage, just as the Greeks, when on long sea voyages, landed and sowed their corn, and did not sail again till the holds were full with the harvest. And just as at every anchorage the Greeks built an altar to their gods who alone could guard them on the hostile coast, so did the Indians erect dwellings for their gods in all their colonies. One can find no better illustration of this process than the Indian colonies which today stretch from Durban to Saigon, with their teeming dwellings, brightly coloured temples, lazy sacred cows and industrious traders.

This "colonisation" in the sociological, not the political, sense of the term, was never a conquest. There was moreover no organised nation to conquer, nor even resistance to overcome. Being peaceful, though far from

disinterested on the short count, its success was due to having no desire to impose a hegemony, or even to exclude others. Curiosity brought the natives crowding to the strangers' settlement where they found a refined civilisation, knowledge and techniques far beyond anything known to them. They exchanged things which had no value for them beyond the trouble of collecting, for things infinitely more precious, that is to say lessons in civilisation. This penetration was made even easier by common characteristics and inclinations, and perhaps also by very ancient contacts, such as we have suggested when discussing the Megalithic culture. Marriages between Indians and native girls, the permanent settlement of some Indians attracted by these pleasant and fertile lands where prosperity was easily won, the lead provided by the most cultivated among the natives, soon led to a complete fusion of the populations, all the more harmonious because it was based on free consent.

Establishment of Indian civilisation

It was in this way that Indian thought came to fertilise all the southern shores of Indochina, the coastal plains of Annam and Malaya, from the delta of the Menam to that of the Mekong. In this school – and India was then with China and with Rome one of the three great centres of civilisation – the peoples of Indochina learnt the elements of higher civilisation. The first of these lessons was how to write their languages in the Indian alphabet, and even today that is the alphabet they use in Burma, Siam, Cambodia and Laos. Next they learnt to master an incomparable instrument of thought, Sanscrit which became the language of civilisation in all that part of the world, playing just the same part as Latin in Mediaeval Europe. India also taught them her political system centred on the king, and her main religious beliefs. Her sacred texts, and her great epics, were so well learnt throughout this India beyond the seas that they became naturalised in each of these lands. Finally India unfolded the secrets of her mathematics and astronomy, making possible calendar calculations of much greater accuracy than in the past, and all her technical skill in husbandry and handicrafts.

Archaeology of Indian expansion

Naturally Indian art, the expression of all that is Indian, also came to the shores of Indochina, and we find purely Indian works scattered along the route, confirming the progress we have just described. It is remarkable that, for the first few centuries A.D. we find nothing but bronze Buddhas. But that is most likely due to the chances of discovery, for the earliest native works, which were pure copies, prove that Hindu gods travelled too. The oldest, finest, and most assuredly Indian of these bronze Buddhas is that found by the river Kamara in the Celebes, which is a masterpiece in the purest Amaravati style of the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. But, as the head is damaged and we cannot see the details of the headdress, it is uncertain whether it was actually made at Amaravati, or in Ceylon. One arm is gracefully bent in a gesture while the other holds the robe, whose folds are indicated by incised lines, and the whole is of the greatest

beauty of form and finish. A little later, from the 4th and 5th centuries, we find another group of works influenced by India, but this time by the school of the north, then the eminent school in India, rather than by southern styles. These are probably the product of local artists, with some variations and an element of individual interpretation.

The best known is the splendid Buddha found at Dong-duong in Annam, that is to say in the ancient land of Champa, and now in the Saigon Museum. The arms are symmetrically folded and the robe is not naturalistically treated, its folds turning into tiny rolls. Very similar figures have been found in Siam, at Korat and Nakon Pathom. But by this time the seed was germinating, and later works are best described in the context of the Indianised states where they were made, and which each have their special flavour.

MAP I IN APPENDIX

The foregoing has indicated the wide sweep of Indianisation. For India it was just an episode without consequence, except perhaps some economic prosperity. So true is this, that when barbarian invasions and political unheavals cut the silk and spice road in about the 6th century, the Indians, no longer having wealthy customers to satisfy, did not think it worth facing the dangers of the journey, and hardly appeared in the Ocean which bears rightly their name. Moreover India, if we except the short lived thalassocracy of Chola, never ventured again beyond her borders in that direction. She even forgot the existence of these former marts, except when her faithful pupils came back on pilgrimage to the source of their civilisation. In all the masses of Indian literature one will hardly find a dozen lines even vaguely referring to this quondam commercial empire, and it was left to European historians to tell the Indians of their own spiritual conquests.

The extent of Indianisation

Certainly the Indians' success was partly due to the relatively high state of civilisation already existing in Indochina when they arrived. In writing of Early History we have already noticed the contrast between the peninsula and the more distant islands, richer in spices and more frequented by the Indians, but lacking in eager and receptive human groups. In Indochina there were people able to understand the Indians because, socially at least, their communities were organised, and they were prepared to engage in international trade, for which the Dong-son culture had already opened the way. They had moreover enough taste and discrimination to choose and select among what the Indians offered, so that the works they themselves produced were not just copies, but things of real individuality. In the end, naturally enough, only those communities flourished which were placed in surroundings the most favourable for man. The others, flushed for a moment by the prosperity of trade, vanished or became mere provinces of their better provided neighbours.

Thus Indochina learnt these lessons from incomparable teachers, and both India and China left indelible seals dividing the land in the two

great systems. In the north the Chinese system was directly imposed, preparing the ground for the future political development of the whole peninsula. In the south India casually dropped the seeds of the fairest flowers of humanism ever to bloom in the land for which Malte-Brun devised the felicitous name of Indochina.

III. THE SHAPING OF THE INDIANISED STATES: THE EMPIRE OF FU-NAN

This radiation of Indian culture in the first centuries of our era brought into being, in every delta and coastal plain of southern Indochina, nations rising quickly to prosperity, and forming the most splendid centres of civilisation in the peninsula, aptly named the Indianised States.

FU-NAN

The oldest and most important of these states was Fu-nan, with its centre in Cochin China between the Bassac and the Gulf of Siam, and perhaps including the southern provinces of modern Cambodia. Very soon this state made its influence felt as far as the shores of Indonesia, and extended its power, more or less, over all the coast of the Gulf of Siam, and, maybe, further into southern Burma.

We can reconstruct the state's history by the help of the Chinese historians who gave it its name. Fu-nan is thought to be the Chinese form of the old Khmer word *bnam* (modern, *phnom*) meaning mountain, a word which might have come into the title of a ruler called "the king of the mountain". We do not yet know precisely who the inhabitants of Fu-nan were. Indian objects are found together with things of very advanced Dong-son style, but neither the race nor language of the makers of the latter are clear. The only bones so far found, those at the Cent-Rues, prove that the people there at least were very like the Indonesians, and that would bear out the hypothesis that Indonesians spread along the coast bringing the Dong-son culture with them. At this same time, Indonesians with the same culture are found on the eastern coast of Malaya. But, in the north of the country at least, the Mon-Khmer people may have played a part simultaneously, and it seems reasonable to suppose that Fu-nan was in the end peopled by these two neighbouring races, who soon fused, and that all the more readily because in the beginning they were not so very different. Altogether, Fu-nan is the direct ancestor of Cambodia, and has always been considered thus by the Khmer.

However that may be, these people were civilised by the Indians landing there at the start of their commercial expansion, for Fu-nan was an ideal half way house on the journey to the Far East. Many routes lead that way; the land road along the coasts of Burma and Siam; the sea route across the Bay of Bengal, through the Isthmus of Kra and across the Gulf of Siam; or finally the round-about route to the south of Sumatra. From Fu-nan the ships, revictualled and safe from the typhoons of the China Sea, could reach the eastern coast of Indochina through canals and down the Bassac, without rounding dangerous Cape Ca-mau, and catch the monsoons to drive them on towards China. Besides, Fu-nan was

Head in false attic window, probably from a sacred building. Phuoc-co-tu, Nui-sam, South Vietnam. Art of Fu-nan: 6th century A.D.? *Terracotta; colours modern; height 0,27 m. National Museum, Saigon.*

close to the forests on the mountains of Cambodia and the Cardamum, rich in all the Indians greedily sought, and there may have been alluvial gold in the river. It also seems likely that, from very early days, this part of the coast was relatively thickly populated, whereas the rest of the shores of the Gulf of Siam were thinly inhabited, or not at all. That must have struck the Indian traders as a considerable advantage. Finally the future Fu-nan offered great areas of fertile alluvial soil to cultivate, and so everything conspired to make it the junction for all the trade of south east Asia.

We have not enough evidence to describe exactly the stages by which Fu-nan developed, and though we need not rely on pure guesswork as when speaking of the process of Indianisation, we cannot yet draw a firm line between legend and history, nor say precisely how the facts learnt from archaeology fit with the latter.

The historic background

The first information about Fu-nan comes from the account written by Chinese Ambassadors who visited it in the middle of the 3rd century, and report the local legend of the foundation of the kingdom, a legend Indian in origin, and one which recurs in Champa and in Cambodian Angkor. A Brahmin, led by a dream, landed on these shores, where he met and married the daughter of a native ruler, often represented as a king-naga, that is to say a fabulous snake. The latter, to provide a dowry for his daughter, drank up the water covering the land, so that his children could then cultivate the soil. This stylised legend admirably describes the process of Indianisation. First the settlement of a trading colony, soon supported by local alliances; then by the efforts of the natives combined with the direction of Indian masters, the recovery of the deltas hitherto swampy and uninhabited.

By the beginning of the 3rd century, at any rate, the king of Fu-nan had already spread his dominion over most of the neighbouring lands on the Gulf of Siam, and sent ambassadors to India and China. The contact with China was to last, but it was especially relations with India which exercised a great and increasing influence through the 4th and 5th centuries. About the year 357 we find reigning at Fu-nan an Indian, possibly of Scythian origin and from the line of Kanishka, which would explain the popularity of the worship of Surya and the frequency of his statue in Funanese art. At any rate a second Indian Brahmin followed him. That was the moment when Fu-nan became a great nation with original art of its own. Then we come to a fairly well documented period, local Sanscrit inscriptions providing us with dates and precise facts. King Kaundinya-Jayavarman, the offspring of a Brahmin who came from India, reigned between 478 and 514 over Fu-nan. He cultivated good relations with China, being helped in this by an Indian monk called Nagasena who brought Funanese statues of Buddha to the Chinese Emperor. For though the dominant religion of Fu-nan and of its kings was that of Brahmins especially devoted to Siva, Buddhism also flourished very early there. Even at that early period two Funanese monks knew Sanscrit well enough to settle in China and translate Buddhist texts into Chinese. That gives us some measure of the country's cultural attainments. The last great Funanese king was Rudravarman (from 514 to after 539), a fervent worshipper of Vishnu, who is responsible for the first great sculptural work preserved from Indianised Indochina. Shortly afterwards Fu-nan was conquered by the Indianised kingdom of Chen-la, which had grown to strength at the same time in the highlands of central Indochina. The fusion of Chen-la and Fu-nan prepared the ground for Angkorian Cambodia.

The civilisation of Fu-nan

Chinese literary sources, powerfully supplemented recently by archaeological air surveys, allow us to sketch the civilisation of Fu-nan. It must have been flourishing before the 4th century, as then it aroused the admiration

of the Chinese, critics whose inclination it was to sneer. According to them the country was brimming with gold, silver, pearls and spices. There is no doubt that from beginning to end trade was at the back of this civilisation. Analysis of the objects excavated from Fu-nan's sites shows that this trade stretched from Rome to China. But if the sailors, and the merchants who settled in the ports, were to live, they had to be sure of food. The coast of Fu-nan only offers two natural harbours in the form of estuaries, and elsewhere, being low and marshy, has no good anchorage, nor could towns be built there without preparation.

Therefore it was the hinterland, and its agricultural exploitation, which was the basis of the whole organisation and subsequent expansion of Fu-nan, and we can safely suppose that it was the Indians who took charge of that. For we know their wonderful work in agricultural irrigation systems and land reclamation, for instance in the Tamil country under the Pallavas, and in Ceylon. Air photographs show an astonishing star-shaped spider's web of canals, all interconnecting and arranged on a general north east-south west plan, from the Bassac to the sea. This follows the basic slope of the land, and it is natural to suppose that the waters flowed that way then as now. But the slow stream allowed the waters of the sea to flow back into the estuaries, depositing its salt on the surrounding ground, and making it uncultivable. It therefore seems likely that the canal network was so arranged by skilful adjustment of the gradients that it both carried the water of the Bassac to the sea, and washed the salt out of the ground, making possible intensive cultivation of floating rice. At the same time the canals could provide substantial quantities of water for the whole area, and allow ships of deep draught to sail right up to the inland towns, and perhaps even, by the Bassac and Mekong, to sail straight down to the eastern coast of Cochin China. At the nerve centres of this elaborate web great cities have been found, in which all the wealth of Fu-nan must have been concentrated. These cities were surrounded by a series of earthworks and moats once filled, according to Chinese writers, with crocodiles. The canals led straight into the towns, dividing them into districts, and one can imagine the houses and warehouses built on piles with ships coming right up to them, just like Venice or the Hanseatic towns. All this was something impressive and unique in south-east Asia at that time, attesting both the economic power and the social organisation of the country and explaining its political power and domination over its neighbours.

Archaeology of Fu-nan

While we know all this about their engineering skill and the way they laid out their land, we know very little about Funanese art in its early stages between the 3rd and 5th centuries. However Chinese writers attest its refinement; the king's palace was built of rare woods and sumptuously furnished; the Funanese cast bronze statues of their gods; in the year 503 Kaundinya-Jayavarman sent the Emperor of China a coral statue of

Buddha and an ivory *stupa*, and a queen of Fu-nan erected a bronze statue "encrusted with gold". But nothing of that remains, and we only know one site in Fu-nan, Oc-eo, where soundings have brought up a few architectural fragments and many important little objects. These objects, with others found by chance in the rest of Fu-nan, give us some idea of the scope and style of early Funanese art.

Architecture

Most of the buildings were on piles, both to keep them above floods and to give direct access to the canals. But nothing, except a few fragments of the piles, survives, and we have to fall back on Chinese descriptions in order to picture them. Probably they were elaborately carved and furnished, and perhaps not very different from those of the pre-Angkor period which we shall describe later. Some buildings were constructed from more durable materials, and there is good reason to believe that these were almost exclusively sanctuaries, brick and stone being, as in India, reserved for the gods, and very rare in that delta land. We have nothing to go on beyond some slight remains bared at Oc-eo, which are hard to interpret. The largest is building A on that site, which consists of imposing brick foundations, orientated east-west, which may have been the base of a *stupa* or of a temple. But the building labelled K at Oc-eo is much more interesting. It is orientated north-south, and is arranged on three levels: brick foundations support a small chamber, roughly rectangular, built of huge slabs of granite, each joined one to the other by tenon and mortise carved out in the slabs; the whole building was surmounted by a little structure, of which two roughly trilobe pediments, also made of granite slabs, have been found, which correspond probably to a corbelled vault. An annexed brick building containing at least three rooms and surrounded by a gallery on three sides, was excavated near by. It would seem that it was an attempt to reconstruct one of the rock or monolithic sanctuaries which were frequent in southern and central India at that time. This influence of Gupta or post-Gupta architecture recurs in other relics of Funanese buildings, especially ceramic architectural ornaments from brick buildings; tiles and finials balusters and little columns, and blind windows framing a human head.

PLATE P. 54

Two beautiful examples of the latter type, attesting an assured taste in decoration, have been found at Nui-sam, and may be dated, judging from Indian prototypes, to the end of the 5th or beginning of the 6th century. It is possible that this architecture in durable materials only comes from the last period of Fu-nan, the 5th century especially. However it is clear that Indian influence was so strong that extraordinary efforts were made to copy a monolithic architecture there, where there were no rocks or cliffs at hand. The technical accomplishment with which the granite slabs were held together, prove a power of initiative and a control of technique which were the first step towards a new architecture.

Sources of Funanese art

Imported pieces must be distinguished from local products among the

Krishna lifting Mount Govardhana, Vat Ko, Ta Kèo, Cambodia. High relief on sandstone probably from an artificial grotto sanctuary. Art of Fu-nan; style A of Phnom Da: between 514 and 539 A.D. *Sandstone; height 1,61 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh*

things found at Oc-eo and elsewhere. The former help us to date the latter, and show from whence their style derived. As with architecture, it is the Indian models that count most. A Buddha head discovered at the Ba-thê and clearly of Gandhara inspiration, is perhaps the oldest Indian object. Jewels of gold have been found, also fine rings with bulls carved in relief, and merchants seals with inscriptions in Sanscrit written with the Brahmin alphabet, which can be dated between the 2nd and 5th centuries. The same traders' formulae have been found carved on semi-precious stones, but the most interesting engravings show religious scenes of a woman pouring a libation on a burning altar, or offering a flower. Such objects, and the many tin amulets with symbols of Vishnu and Siva, are further proof that Indian religious came to Fu-nan. It was not Indian objects only that reached the shores of Fu-nan. A fragment of a bronze mirror dating from the Later Han dynasty, and several buddhist statuettes from the Wei period have been found. There are, again, Roman pieces: a gold medal of Antonius Pius dating from 152 A.D. and a coin of Marcus Aurelius; then there is a series of intaglios on semi-precious stones or glass with, for instance, male portraits, *grylloi*, a cock in a chariot drawn by mice, an erotic scene, etc. Altogether a series of types date from the 2nd to the 4th century, and both help us with the chronology of our Funanese finds, and prove the extent of their trade. This again is proved by a blue glass cabochon carved with a royal personage smelling a flower, and it is certainly Sassanian. But all that should no longer astonish us, when we have found Attic potsherds in Malaya, and a fine Ptolemaic bronze lamp with a Silenus mask at Pong Tuk in Siam, and again Roman pottery lamps in other parts of Indochina. Such models are the best explanation for the western influences recognized in Dong-son's art, the more so if the inhabitants of Fu-nan and Dong-son were akin.

Nevertheless such objects do not seem to have had any influence on the style of the sculpture of Fu-nan, or the schools deriving therefrom. They only come in small numbers, passed from hand to hand by the Indians. At Oc-eo, at any rate, no direct proof has been found that men from the Mediterranean lived there, as is the case at the Indian ports. And, from the opposite angle, Roman and Greek writers manifestly abound in first-hand details about India, but are much vaguer about "India beyond the Ganges" as they call the lands with which we are concerned. But it is still possible that these objects, especially Roman gems, may have inspired the local engravers who excelled in this art little practised in India, and not found, or hardly found, in Indochina at a later date. The same may also be true of the flourishing manufacture of beads of glass and semi-precious stones, in which, no doubt, the Funanese traded.

The beginnings of Funanese art

So it is in India that we should look for the models for Funanese art of this period, both sculpture and architecture. For side by side with

imported articles we find objects clearly made locally. To begin with these were modest enough, being mostly engraved stones, moulded tin plaques and jewels. But they do tell us something about their makers, give us an insight into their beliefs, and record the first steps forward of a local school taught by Indian example.

The most important of these are beautiful carved gems on which is a personage seated on a low throne, with one leg resting bent back on the throne and the other hanging free, in the attitude well known in Indian iconography as "royal ease". Sometimes he is seated beneath a canopy or wearing a conical cap. One finds this theme again on tin plaques, which have on the reverse a humped bull, the royal animal *par excellence*. There is every reason to suppose that the figure must be a ruler, in fact the "king of the mountain" himself, who reigned over Fu-nan. Equally important are other carved gems, this time of local make, showing the woman with offerings who, with the amulets already mentioned as mostly of native work, prove that the Funanese adopted Indian religions. Finally there are other tin plaques on which the inhabitants of Fu-nan can be recognised, lightly clad, with long plaited hair, just the "half-naked savages" encountered by the first Indian sailors, who were to show themselves such good pupils. The jewels in particular show that the Funanese soon equalled their masters. There are earrings in gold with delicate catches, lovely gold filigree, glass beads, intaglios etc. As we have said before, the growth of these industries must have been one of the causes of Funanese prosperity, for such things were as good as current coin in all the southern seas. The Funanese, therefore, should have been in a position to carry on the commerce initiated by the Indians, but of which the latter so soon grew tired for the reasons mentioned.

Funanese sculpture

Unfortunately no major work, in particular no sculpture, was found at Oc-eo, though we know that statues existed, for they were sent to China. Stone statues must have been very rare down to the 5th century or thereabouts, the kingdom of Fu-nan being then more or less limited to the stoneless plains of the delta. Therefore moulded metal or wood were preferred, and in the "Plain of Reeds" standing Buddhas have been found, one of them most beautiful and so like Gupta work that it can be dated to the end of the 4th century. Thus it follows on from the Buddhas imported from India, and also from a head of Buddha found at Vat Romlok in southern Cambodia, which is very clearly based on an Amaravati model. Fragments of bronze Buddhas of the same group have been found at Oc-eo too.

The Phnom Da style

But the first group of works that can definitely be classed as Funanese dates from the first quarter of the 6th century. These are statues of Vishnu, almost all coming from the hill of Phnom Da, which was the sacred acropolis of the neighbouring capital, Angkor Borei. It would seem that at that time the capital had been removed thither, either

because of pressure from Chen-la in the north, or, in our view more probably, because a change in the course of the Bassac had made the Trans-Bassac country uninhabitable, and caused a movement of population to the lands of southern Cambodia, which were permanently above flood level. It is also possible that the importance of sea-trade had by then diminished, and with it the pre-eminence of the coastal region. However that may be, stone was easily come by in the new lands, and stone sculpture makes its appearance.

These statues can be dated to the reign of King Rudravaraman (514 to after 539), whose inscriptions prove him to have been a devout worshipper of Vishnu. All the most beautiful of these works, which have been given the label "Phnom Da style A", fall within his reign. Outstanding are the two statues of Krishna-Govardhan (one in the Stoclet collection in Brussels, and one in the Museum at Phnom Penh), and the two great statues of Vishnu Balarama and Vishnu Parasurama, and that of Lakshamana, all from Phnom Da and in the Phnom Penh Museum. PLATE P. 58

Obviously there are Indian prototypes of these works, and they can be tracked down with some exactness to post-Gupta times, and to what is known as the first Ellora style (that is to say caves 1—10 and 14, Ravana ka khai, and 19, Ramesvara, at Ellora, and the caves of Aurangabad and Deogarh). But they are original works of art in their own right, and even an inexperienced eye would never confuse them with Indian work. For they are works effectively conceived in the round. Whereas Indian sculptors never could, or would, make free standing statues, but always confined themselves to very high relief, letting their work be backed, and enclosed, by a stele or a wall. That convention was accepted in Champa and in Java, but from the beginning the sculptors of Fu-nan branched out in another direction. Of course the Krisha-Govardhanas were backed by a stone panel, for the subject, a figure lifting a mountain on his hand, imposed that treatment, it being hard to imagine a mountain, carved in the round, balanced on a man's hand. Moreover these works probably decorated the walls of an artificial grotto made by putting stone panels together; for at Phnom Da one could not carve a cave out of the rock, as was done in India.

But other figures of divinities, the idols of these grotto-temples, are entirely conceived in the round, and the back has received as much attention as the front. They are not, however, completely free standing as yet. No doubt the sculptor was afraid to leave considerable weights of stone free in the air, with nothing to support them but the fragile ankles by which they were attached. In any case it would be perilous enough to carve out free in the round such delicate extremities as hands, and the attributes held in them. But the conventions of Indian iconography, which had been adopted *in toto,* made the problem much worse, for Vishnu had to be given four, or even eight, arms. For this reason the

Lakshmi from Koh Krieng, Kratie, Cambodia. Khmer art; Sambor style: first third of the 7th century. *Sandstone; height 1,27 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

Funanese sculptor did not entirely dispense with the stele familiar from his Indian models. But he carved body and arms in the round, knocking away the middle of the stele, and only leaving a horseshoe shaped halo of stone. He could then easily chisel the hands and their attributes on this supporting arch, and by so doing give additional support to the arms, thus ensuring the stability of the whole. Other ways round were also tried to solve this technical difficulty. Sometimes such attributes as a club or weapon held downwards would, structurally, be carved out of one piece with the stone base, and so provide added support on either side of the legs. Or a fold of the dress fell to the ground between the legs, and so strengthened them. Or stone supports were left between hands and shoulders. But all these artifices, very skilfully handled, did not prevent light bathing the body from all sides, or the body being conceived integrally in the round. That is the vital step forward taken by the Indianising sculptors of south-east Asia, and on that depends the whole progress of Khmer sculpture.

The bodies are delicate and graceful, soft and smoothly rounded, with muscles indicated only slightly, but yet with astonishing sensitivity, so that one feels the swing of a body in motion, or the balance of a gently bending body at rest.

The briefest loin cloth, passing between the legs and held by a belt, is all the clothes these statues have, and they are not loaded with jewels, though it may be that in the temples they would have been decorated with real gems. The headdresses are of interest; sometimes it is the cylindrical mitre of Vishnu; sometimes there are complicated constructions of plaits and tresses, but always, and this is characteristic, there is a fringe of curls of natural hair allowed to appear beneath the headdresses. The calm and serene beauty of the rounded faces, with noses delicate and curved, and narrow almond eyes beneath the high joining curves of eyebrows, make complete works of marvellous purity.

After the reign of Rudravarman, and perhaps down to the middle of the 5th century, when Fu-nan submitted to Chen-la, the same style of sculpture continues, but loses some of its finest qualities. So works of this period, such as the Vishnus of Tuol Dai Buon and Chong Pisei (both in the Phnom Penh Museum) have been classified as "Phnom Da, style B". The treatment of the body is hazy; the headdress is less well rendered, for it is not so well understood; the rendering of the clothes is also clumsy, and there is an additional fold hanging in front shaped like a "fishtail" which is to become one of the essential characteristics of Khmer statues.

As well as this Hindu art, statues of Buddha are found which can with probability be attributed to the successive Phnom Da styles. We have already seen how greatly Buddhism influenced Fu-nan. First, the Lesser Vehicle (Theravada) and then the Great Vehicle (Mahayana) came into

favour with the inhabitants, so it is natural to find representations of the Sage, especially as the Southern Indians were the first to popularise that subject. After the Vat Romlok head and the wooden statues, which may date from the 4th or 5th century, one can place in the reign of Rudravarman the two very beautiful standing Buddhas also found at Vat Romlok, and now in the Phnom Penh Museum. They are clearly derived from post-Gupta types, though, unlike the latter, they are sexless beneath their tightly clinging garments, a trait which was to remain characteristic of all Buddhist sculpture in south-east Asia. As with the figures of Vishnu, these statues are conceived in the round, the only artificial support being a stone drapery right across the base out of which ankles and the fringes of the robe are carved. For this the model must have come from India, for there a free standing Buddha type was evolved very early, by the Amaravati school in particular. For the rest the gentle modelling in delicate curves, the rounded and almost smiling faces, and the treatment of eyes and nose are nearly the same as that found in Phnom Da style A. There is one peculiarity which was to persist in Cambodia; the curls of the headdress are represented by large flat spirals, and the chignon, the *ushnisha,* is absent or scarcely visible. A little later in date and roughly contemporary with Phnom Da style B, come some statues of Buddha usually represented seated. They almost all come from the south of Cochin China, where the Fu-nan tradition long survived. The best of these is the Buddha of Son-tho (Tra-vinh), but one must admit that the aesthetic decline is even more marked than in the case of the Hindu sculptures, and such works are of chiefly historic interest. The Funanese Buddhist style branched out in several directions at once, so one cannot point to any salient characteristics. Moreover too few specimens are known to provide a basis of classification, and there is no homogeneous group similar to that of Phnom Da, whose fine quality was due to enlightened royal patronage.

Architecture

We know nothing of the architecture of this last phase of Funanese art, and no building of that period has been identified at Angkor Borei. We have only noted the use of sculpture to decorate artificial cave temples at Phnom Da, a substitute for real rocks in the tradition of building K at Oc-eo. And this conscious imitation of Indian originals was the more easily continued thanks to the discovery of this technique which felicitously overcame the local shortage of material. We must also mention the discovery of stucco heads at Angkor Borei. They are certainly inferior works, with stylised and ill understood headdresses, and date perhaps from the 7th century. But they prove the existence of brick architecture decorated in stucco such as we shall find again in pre-Angkor Cambodia, and which must have been a continuation of Funanese tradition. So these humble finds provide precious evidence of the way in which the style of Sambor came to develop. These objects were certainly not the highest art of which Fu-nan was capable, but we have nothing better

surviving. On the eve of its eclipse as a political entity after four hundred years of flourishing existence, the art of Fu-nan was developing in many directions, a fact which we should not overlook, although we lack evidence to describe it exactly. It must have been a fully evolved artistic tradition, technically competent and assured of its aesthetic values, in many respects original, and owing nothing but the iconography of its subject matter to India. It was clearly the expression of a new society. When Fu-nan was absorbed by Chen-la, its artistic tradition continued without interruption throughout the 6th and even into the 7th century, and its influence must be considered. In spite of the political divisions destined to divide up Indochina for the next two centuries, all the Indianised part of the peninsula felt the effect of Funanese art, which was at the back of all the various styles which evolved.

Other less magnificent Indianised states had been taking shape in Indochina at the same time as Fu-nan, but we know even less about them, for there has not yet been any archaeological research into that period elsewhere in the peninsula.

CHAMPA

The kingdom of Champa is the only one about which we do have a little information, for it was the immediate neighbour of the Han colonies in Tonkin and, from the start, was at war with them. It is therefore frequently mentioned by Chinese historians, especially from the 3rd century onwards. The first mention is of warlike states to the south of the Col of Clouds at the end of the 2nd century A.D. The country was called Lin-yi by the Chinese, who were continually harassed by these raids. The Cham living there must have been of the same Indonesian stock as the creators of the Dong-son culture further to the north. It seems most likely that their culture was ultimately derived from that source, though overlaid by dominating Indian influence. As they were intrepid seafarers, and as their land was well placed not far from the sea route from India to China at the foot of spice-bearing mountains, the Cham were bound very early to attract the attention of Indian traders. The splendid Buddha, found on that coast at Dong-duong, has already been mentioned as a work of the Amaravati school. It cannot be a chance that a principality established there under Indian influence was also called Amaravati (the modern Quang-nam). Almost at the same time other principalities became established at favourable points along the coast; Vijaya in the modern Quang-binh; Khautara in the plain of Nha-trang, and Panduranga in the plain of Phan-rang. Though Indian influence predominated, we must not leave the Chinese out of account. For the Cham, if only because they fought them, were in constant contact with the Chinese, and it was Chinese influence which had largely shaped Dong-son culture.

While the Cham were continually either sending ambassadors to the Chinese or fighting them throughout the 3rd and 4th centuries, they also

developed close relations with Fu-nan, and that must have considerably aided the spread of Indian influence. We can date to about the year 400 the first historical Cham King, Bhadravarman, who dedicated a temple to Siva in a hollow of the mountains at Mi-son, a place which in the coming centuries was to be the centre of royal worship. His capital must have been at the modern Tra-kieu, where he has left inscriptions both in Sanscrit and in the Cham language. But there is nothing left either of the temple or of the city, which was subsequently burnt. The Chinese tell us that the Cham of that period were skilled builders in brick, and there is every reason to suppose that they were equally skilled in bronze casting and in carving. But until the 7th century, when a new dynasty came to the fore, we know hardly anything about their art. However the formative period of their art, the time during which they assimilated the different cultural influences, must have been before the 7th century, for in the first works known to us their style is completely formed and original

THE MALAYAN PENINSULA AND SIAM

To judge from the map, it seems natural to assume that the Malayan peninsula was a necessary staging-post on the sea route from India to the Far East, and that it must have played an essential part in the diffusion of Indian art. But, whatever may have been said, this is extremely doubtful. There is no positive archaeological evidence to support that view from the south of Malaya, and what little there has been found in central Malaya is of secondary importance and dates, for the most part, from later than the 6th century. What has been found, therefore, might just as well be attributed to the influence of Fu-nan, which is known to have been preponderant then. It seems in fact that the most used sea route went round the south of Sumatra and thence to Java. Whereas the most important land route went through Burma by way of Mulmein Tavoy and Pra Pathom, which would well explain the prosperity, at a very early date, of the latter region.

Nevertheless one does find Indianised states in central Malaya from the 2nd century, and serious archaeological research may yet have surprises in store for us. Down to the 5th and 6th centuries Chinese historians mention various kingdoms, which must have been subsequently conquered by Fu-nan. The most important were that of Tambralinga, no doubt in the region of the modern Ligor, and Lankasuka in northern Perak, stretching from the eastern to the western coast. Sanscrit inscriptions dating back to the 5th century have been found in that area. In a Bronze Age stratum at Kuala Selingsing a cornelian seal was found with the name of Sri Vishnuvarman, written in an alphabet which must be no older than the 5th century and is related to that of Oc-eo. At Kedah on the banks of the Bujang a little bronze Buddha was excavated, and it can confidently be related to Gupta prototypes of the 4th century, and is very like objects of the same date found at Pong Tuk in Siam, with which we will deal later. Chinese writers tell us that the inhabitants of Lankasuka lived in

Avalokitesvara from Ak yum, Angkor. Khmer art; Prei Kmeng style: 2nd half of 7th century. *Bronze; height 0,355 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

towns surrounded by brick walls, and that they built wooden palaces with tiered roofs. But that is almost all we know.

At the same time the Pyu along the Irawadi and the Mon along the Menam were also adopting Indian civilisation in much the same way. From the 6th century, at latest, colonies converted to Buddhism flourished round Prome, Pagan and Thaton in Burma, and Srideb, Korat, Pra Pathom and Pong Tuk in Siam. At a later date the two latter places formed part of the great Mon kingdom of Dvaravati, and may, for all we know, have done so earlier. Gupta influence is shown in some little bronze Buddhas found at Korat and at Pra Pathom, which both in date and in the style from which they derive resemble first the Dong-duong Buddha and later on the early Buddhas from Fu-nan and Malaya already mentioned. It would seem that in Siam Buddhism lasted longer, or at least prevailed more exclusively, for Buddhas in that style continued to be made at Pra Pathom and Pong Tuk until the introduction of the type which can properly be called "Mon". But the scarce and scattered evidence does not allow us to be more explicit.

Moreover, possible extent of Fu-nanese influence in this area adds to our doubts. The political expansion of that great kingdom makes it likely that it would have influenced the style of these sculptures, perhaps prevailing over the models that first came from India, or modifying them. Thus a wonderful torso of Krishna Govardhana was found at Srideb, and is now in the Bangkok Museum. This work is so very like the statues from Phnom Da that it might be a work of this school, but it might also be one of the prototypes of Funanese art.

Details may be doubtful, but the general picture is clear. Not later than the 2nd century the whole of southern Indochina became subject to Indian influence, and this influence bore fruit, especially from the 5th century onwards, in the form of a variety of civilisations with their own individuality. By about that later date each of the main component parts of Indochina emerge as autonomous and firmly organised communities. Of these Fu-nan was the largest, richest and most important. Fu-nan soon succeeded in dominating her neighbours politically, for her power was based not on trade alone, but on a happily diversified economy including industry and intensive agriculture. As one would expect, her art stands out, in spite of the great gaps in our knowledge, as the most dynamic, original and beautiful. Though Fu-nan as a political entity was to disappear, it is nonetheless proper that she should give her name to the whole period. That her memory remained green is proved by the fact that, up to the foundation of Angkor, the Khmer rulers linked themselves to the Monarchs of the kingdom of Fu-nan, while the rulers of Srivijaya and the great Sailendra dynasty in Java as well also claimed to be her successors.

IV. PRE-ANGKOR INDOCHINA: THE EMPIRE OF CHEN-LA

While Fu-nan was flourishing, a new Indianising state was taking shape along the middle reaches of the Mekong, and along the Se Mun from Bassak to Roi Et. We call it Chen-la, the name given by Chinese historians, but do not know the derivation of that name.

THE RISE OF CHEN-LA

This state was certainly in existence by the end of the 6th century. The first inscriptions in the Khmer language, dating back to the beginning of the 7th century and found there, prove that the majority of the inhabitants were of that race. A later legend about the origin of Fu-nan makes Chen-la the cradle of the mythical Kambuja race, from which derives the modern name of Cambodia for the Khmer land and people.

It is possible that down to the end of the 5th century, Chen-la was limited to the tableland watered by the Se Mun, while the Bassak region was under Cham domination. Mi-son is not far from that district and easily reached. At that time a Cham ruler erected a linga in a temple dedicated to Siva on the same mountain where, later, Vat Phu was to arise and become the holy city of Chen-la. About the middle of the 6th century, a king of Chen-la, Bhavavarman I, who was sprung from the royal house of Fu-nan, and probably a grandson of the great Rudravarman, married a princess of Chen-la and unified the country. He also strove to conquer Fu-nan, perhaps in an effort to maintain his family's rights. When he died, soon after 598, unification of the two kingdoms was far advanced. His brother, Chitrasena, who had helped him in his undertakings, succeeded him and took as king the name of Mahendravarman. He almost completed the conquest of Fu-nan, and established many foundations in honour of Siva throughout his kingdom. Thereafter his son, Isanavarman, reigned in splendour from 616 (or perhaps 611) to 635. He founded a new capital, Isanapura, on the site of the modern Sambor Prei Kuk (Kompong Thom), and there the art of Chen-la first took shape. This "Sambor" style is also the first phase of what can properly be called Khmer art.

The change from Fu-nan to Chen-la

Before speaking of the works of art themselves, it is best to describe the change brought about in Indianised Indochina by this political upheaval. The contrast between Chen-la and Fu-nan is so marked that one is in danger of verging on caricature in describing it. The majority of the Funanese people had accepted Indian civilisation, and were settled by the sea from which most of their prosperity derived. It was an open civilisation which soon became international, accepting every influence, and apparently basically pacific. The Khmers from Chen-la on the other

hand were a homogeneous people, inhabiting the highlands of continental Indochina, with no interest in the sea, farmers first and foremost, but gladly turning to war, and ready to supplement their native poverty by pillaging and enslaving their neighbours. Their methods of cultivation were also in complete contrast. The Funanese had to drain a marshy delta, and to worry about too much water rather than too little. Their main crop was rice in flooded fields. But the Khmer cultivated highlands drained by the natural fall of the land, and their problem was to catch enough water to supply their fields of mountain rice during the dry season. Naturally these differences stamped their effect on the contrasting societies. It is likely that fascinated by the riches of Fu-nan the Khmer were drawn down into the plain, one of the first examples of the "call of the South" which shaped the evolution of Indochina. They did not however stay in the former Funanese territory. As already mentioned, changes in the course of the Bassac may have caused serious floods, and rendered the Transbassac region, the former nucleus of Fu-nan, almost uninhabitable. Admitting this, nevertheless relics of the old Fu-nan survived for centuries in Cochin China, whereas the centre of Cambodia always in practice remained to the north of Phnom Penh. Although such great capitals as Sambor Prei Kuk and, more especially, Angkor had access to the sea down the river, that fact came to have less and less importance in the life of the Khmer Empire which can fairly be said to have turned its back on the sea. Moreover on many occasions Khmer power retreated into its native highlands in the extreme north of Cambodia and the tablelands of Korat and Roi Et, abandoning the plains.

But the most important point, and one which has not received enough attention, is that the Khmer never carried on the way of cultivating the delta lands discovered by the Funanese. Archaeological evidence is lacking, but there are our air surveys which show in broad outline what use they made of the land. In then the towns of Chen-la are seen to have included wide stretches of land surrounded by an earth rampart and a very broad moat. The moat is almost always filled from a perennial stream, at a higher level, directly connected with it. It was thus kept automatically full, and provided the water to irrigate the rice fields within the enclosure, thereby assuring the town's food supply. This "captive water" technique which suited both the climate and the nature of the land, was transported by the Khmer into the dry lands of Cambodia, and it was later to prove the basis of the power of Angkor. The Funanese too, as we know from Chinese sources, had been accustomed to build artificial tanks near the villages, but they do not seem to have known this way of irrigating dry land. Only occasionally did the Khmer make use of the flooded land by the Mekong, draining off the superfluous water, and they never exploited the Mekong delta. Such scattered groups as did live in the delta confined themselves to strips of alluvial soil, or patches of land emerging above

the water. There is thus a deep contrast between the way the Funanese and the Khmer used the land, and we shall see the results of it in the civilisation of Angkor. They did however have one trait in common: the need for a centralised society under a single strong power to create and maintain such systems. In that respect Chen-la was the direct successor of Fu-nan, and used the same methods to maintain a similar political authority. The two Empires also shared an initial grounding in Indian civilisation, and the victorious Chen-la carried on the brilliant civilisation of conquered Fu-nan without a barbarian interruption.

Survivals of Funanese art

We know practically nothing about the art of Chen-la before the reign of Isanavarman, and that ignorance makes it seem as if some characteristics of the style of Sambor sprang ready armed from that King's brain. But perhaps that earlier art was rather mediocre, or soon forgotten, for it is chiefly Funanese influence which seems to be at the back of Khmer art, especially Khmer sculpture. For the aesthetic standards of Phnom Da still bore fruit throughout the second half of the 6th century, though at the time the fate of Fu-nan was in the balance. In Cochin China we find an interesting group of hinduistic figures, mostly of Surya, and also buddhistic, directly derived from Phnom Da style B. Some of them are very beautiful, for instance the Avalokitesvara in the Didelot collection, which is one of the first creations of Mahayana Buddhism in south east Asia. But by and large there is a sense of decadence, the conventions of an earlier age turning stiff and dry. Nevertheless there was enough strength in this tradition to inspire the artists who came together at Sambor, the new capital of Chen-la, to create works of exceptional beauty and vitality.

THE SAMBOR STYLE

The researches at Sambor Prei Kuk have revealed the earliest known architectural ensemble in Indochina. From this time onward we have enough buildings and statues preserved to enable us to study the successive styles of Khmer architecture and sculpture in increasing detail.

The Khmer conception of religious architecture

Before beginning to describe these first Khmer temples, it is best briefly to consider with what intention they were built, and so what instructions were given to the architects. The Khmer, like the Indians whose religions they had adopted *in toto,* thought of a temple as the house of the god they worshipped, and thought of the idol in it as the god actually living there. He could therefore be adored in person, and also be compelled by ritual to fulfil the worshipper's desires. The temple was in no sense a meeting place for the faithful who were practically not allowed in, access being reserved for Brahmins. That explains the comparative smallness of Khmer temples, which consisted originally of a series of small separate buildings: a sanctuary tower containing simply an idol of the chief god, one or more additional sanctuaries for his followers, wife and mounts, then, but often in wood which has perished, treasuries for ritual objects and sacred books. The whole was contained in an enclosure whose gate-houses were often copies in miniature of the main sanctuary and might

serve as stables for the mounts of the god and the protecting divinities. Outside this enclosure were the houses for the priests, temple musicians and dancers, servants and slaves, which all being made of wood, have left no trace except the second enclosure containing them.

The shape, ornament and furniture of the temple symbolically expressed the beliefs connected with the god sheltered within. Being part of the religion, a temple, a statue are but elements of the rites and, as such, dictated by the priest to the artist, leaving him only the choice of the technical ways of building them. In the first place, the Hindu Gods were believed to dwell at the centre of the world, on the sacred Mount Meru, and to rule space and time, for which reason the temple is laid out in strict conformity with the points of the compass. The facade and main entrance face the east, the rising sun, source of all life. The main sanctuary, in principle at the centre of the enclosure symbolising the world, is itself a symbol of Mount Meru, and the god, in the form of his idol, dwells therein. It is often also a plastic representation of the sacred Mount, its towering shape imitating a mountain peak. Moreover, if possible, the temple is placed at the centre of the town, near the royal palace, a concrete symbol of the centre of the universe where lives the king, the viceroy of the gods on earth. Finally, the sanctuary walls are decorated with scenes representing the life and exploits of the god, or else show his worshippers and garlands of flowers which all pay eternal respect to the god of the sanctuary.

This comparatively simple lay-out was thoughtout both fundamental and sufficient. It was retained practically unchanged through the centuries, since it was dictated by the sacred texts and so charged with magic power that it could not be deliberately modified. And after all, it was effective so long as the religion itself gave satisfaction; any modification of the architectural scheme generally corresponds with the adoption of a new religion. It is important to realise that in a liturgy repetition is no sign of weakness, but rather, as much as any other element, a part of the ritual, and that no modification is to be thought of, for that would be the mere indulgence of a personal whim. By the same token, the Christ-type has been maintained without important change through fifteen centuries of Christian art. We should therefore not be surprised to find the same architectural forms and iconography constant throughout Khmer art. What did change was the sculptural expression and the details of execution and ornament which make up a style. Moreover, by and large, it is the finest of achievements to breathe new life into an accepted formula and make it more beautiful, without the adventitious aid of novelty.

Respect for ancient forms also explains one feature of Indian architecture adopted in Indochina; the continued use of shapes suited to work in wood. The first sanctuaries having been made of wood, forms suited to the carpenter or woodworker were reproduced when they were made in brick or

stone to last longer. To us that seems to spurn all structural logic, since any material in our view should be used in accordance with its physical properties. But we should not forget that Greek architecture, that miracle of reason, started from the same convention, and from column to pediment is only a stylisation in marble of carpentry. So the Khmer tower-sanctuary is basically a copy of a wooden building, square or quadrilateral, supported on four main pillars, and roofed often with timbers stepped up and decreasing in size to cover the whole area, though that is not large. Later, either because the structure of the old timber roof was not understood, or from a desire to represent the superimposed worlds over which the gods were enthroned, the tower was built up out of diminishing replicas of the main structure piled one on top of the other.

The decoration too imitates wood. When brick was used, it was covered with a stucco-like coating which could be carved as lavishly and richly as wood. Sandstone was used the better to imitate the wooden skeleton, for little columns and lintels framing the door, and for the frames and balusters of windows, etc. Moreover the sandstone paradoxically imitated wood both in shape and handling. A fact which unfortunately weakened the structure, and is one of the reasons why these monuments have fallen into ruin. Finally the buildings were probably enriched with gilt and polychromy, and with sumptuous furnishings, and jewels and brocades to decorate the sanctuary and clothe the idol. That should never be forgotten as we look at the naked skeleton of ruined buildings.

The architecture of Sambor

The oldest known monuments of Khmer art, and the oldest brick or sandstone buildings in the whole of Indochina, are the brick tower at Preah Theat Touch (Kompong Thom), and the curious sandstone building of Asram Maha Rosei (Ta Kèo). It is possible, though we think unlikely, that the latter dates from Fu-nan times. We are more inclined to regard it as an imitation of such Pallava architecture as the temple of Panamalai, which the Asram powerfully brings to mind, and to date it to about the middle of the 7th century. But the problem is not very important, as there is no later building like it in Cambodia. It is only at Sambor Prei Kuk that we are really able to study the development of architecture. For there we have an astonishing wealth and variety of buildings. One might suppose that they all sprang, ready armed, from the head of Isanavarman, but to do that would leave out of account four centuries of building in Chen-la and Fu-nan, whereof a few traces have already been mentioned.

Indian models, post-Gupta especially, have clearly been imitated. But we cannot point out the actual models, as the Sambor temples are copying wooden originals which, in India as elsewhere, have perished, leaving us only with stone versions of undoubtedly later date in the rock or monolithic temples. We also know nothing of the possible evolution from these originals in Funanese architecture.

Hari-Hara from Prasat Andet, Kompong Thom, Cambodia. Khmer art; Prasat Andet style; between 657 and 681. *Sandstone; height 1,94 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

The two main architectural ensembles of this first period at Sambor Prei Kuk are those of the south and north. From the air we see that they were in the middle of a huge city surrounded by an earth rampart and a moat fed by the then neighbouring river Stung Sen, all in accordance with the type of lay-out we found in Chen-la. The southern group, probably built as a whole in Isanavarman's reign, is the most beautiful. It is surrounded by two enclosures. The one round the temple itself is of fine brick work ornamented with sculptured scenes in large medallions. Only the brick basis is preserved, but that is enough to give a sense of dynamism and of plastic understanding. In the eastern side of the enclosure is a brick gate-tower (S 2), and the decoration of the sandstone canopy within this tower is one of the most beautiful creations of Khmer art. It is almost certain that it was the stable for the *nandi,* the riding bull of Siva who inhabited the central shrine. The latter is a majestic tower, built on a terrace, and wonderfully well proportioned. It once contained a gold linga dedicated by Isanavarman, and it is surrounded by five polygonal towers most felicitously grouped.

The northern group includes buildings of very various date, but the central shrine at least goes back to the reign of Isanavarman. It was on a high terrace where there was a central tower (S 1) and was flanked by four little temples but it is almost all in ruins. Only the sandstone bases of the statues which must have surrounded it, remain, but their decoration is as fine as that of the canopy in S 2. Further to the north there is a little chamber (N 17) made of sandstone slabs decorated very simply with sham attic windows like the terracota ones from Fu-nan. Little chambers of this type are found again in Cambodia during the next reign, but after that no more, as if it were a last echo of India.

These buildings were sumptuously decorated, but all too often the stucco has perished, and we can only discover its main elements from the brick prepared to receive it. But where sandstone was used, it is preserved. The lintels, especially those of S 1, are among the finest in Khmer art, and some of them almost fall into the category of high relief. They are all carved with an arcature in imitation of the wooden lintels spanning Indian porticos, or *torana,* from which offerings of garlands of flowers or leaves were suspended. On this arcature are medallions representing divine beings; the ends of the arcature are bent downwards, and swallowed by those marine monsters familiar in India, the *makaras.* Below, in the case of S 1, are divine figures wonderfully well grouped round a central personage. In other cases garlands of flowers are carved there. This latter type became the most usual in later ages, and from it originates the classical Khmer lintel. The door is framed by beautiful little round columns with a turban-shaped bulge at the top reminiscent of Indian originals. Below that comes a fine garland frieze, and the rest of the shaft is smooth save for a little ring in the middle. On the walls of the towers

Fig. 10

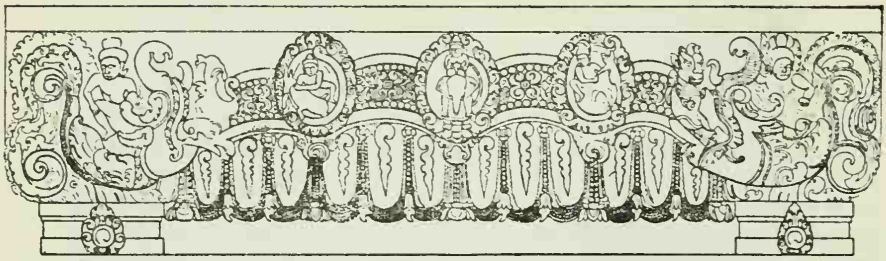


FIG. 10 — *Lintel in Sambor style; first third of the VIIth century.*

are carved delightful "flying palaces" inhabited by celestial beings of rare grace and charm.

Sculpture

Very few statues in the round of Sambor style are preserved, but those few make us bitterly regret the loss. The most beautiful works are the great Hari-Hara from S 10, the Uma from the northern group in Sambor, and the Lakshmi from Koh Krieng (Sambor of the Mekong, Kracé), all in the Phnom Penh Museum. The Hari-Hara retains the way of doing the hair which was brought to elaborate development in the Phnom Da phase, and also the supporting arch, but that is now of standardised form and no longer adapted to the needs of the particular work. But the strong body with muscles clearly shown, and the face smaller than those of Phnom Da but with more sharply accented features, are characteristic of the new style. As for the Lakhsmi of Koh Krieng, that is the first of a series of female statues whose development continues throughout the 7th century. Already there is a more marked stylisation than in works from Phnom Da. Perhaps this style of feminine beauty derived from India is a little too rotund for our taste. But the flamelike hair, the restrained elaboration of the belt, the transparent drapery, and the calm round smiling face make it unforgettable.

PLATE P. 62

Such architecture and such statues bear witness to the sumptuous and self-confident taste of a royal patron. The Sambor phase, in itself one of the most beautiful moments of Khmer art, is also a masterly prelude to what came later.

THE PREI KMENG STYLE

Some years after the death of Isanavarman (about 628) a new ruler, Bhavavarman II, comes to the fore. His reign began before 639, and lasted at least till 656. We do not know how he came to power, and it may be that from this time political troubles hung heavy over Chen-la. Nonetheless Bhavavarman II extended and consolidated his power. There are inscriptions and foundations of buildings dating from his reign, in particular

at Phnom Bayang (Ta Kèo), Phnom Preah Vihear and Han Chei (Kompong Thom), but no temple can be ascribed definitely to him and the site of his capital is unknown. We do know that during his reign the cult of Siva was imposed by force as the royal religion, though worship of Hari-Hara and of Vishnu continued. The style of Hindu female statues also evolved at this time. But, in religion, the most interesting event is the sudden spread of Mahayana Buddhist images, and it would seem that it was first at this time that this religion came into favour with the peoples of Indochina. Moreover, whatever political dissensions there may have been, the wide diffusion of images in the same style from Laos to Cochin China indicates that, culturally at least, a certain unity prevailed.

The little shrine of Prei Kmeng, in which the most characteristic works of this type were found, has given its name to the whole style. The first phase thereof is contemporary with the last phase of Sambor, but its main development took place in the reign of Bhavavarman II; it continued during the Prasat Andet phase, and was to influence, right down to the end of the 7th century, the last pre-Angkor style known as that of Kompong Preah. Such overlapping is natural at a time of no assured political unity, when the break-up of the country both encouraged the formation of various local schools and kept old traditions alive locally.

Architecture

Due perhaps to the political instability, the tower-sanctuaries of this period are few and undistinguished. At Han Chei we find the last example of the little chamber panelled in sandstone, and that marks the end of slavish imitation of Indian models. The brick towers keep the proportions of those of Sambor, but on a much smaller scale and it is true that no royal foundation of that period is known to us. The lintels too are impoverished, with no *makaras* swallowing the central arcature which instead just ends in an inward twisting curl of leaves. The decorative medallions have only leaves instead of figures. Moreover pendant garlands gradually invade the whole lintel. On the other hand it is just at this time that we find a series of beautiful lintels under the arcature carved in relief with religious scenes of great iconographical interest, and useful to date similar statues. The little columns have begun to change; they have lost the bulge on top, and a fillet frames the surmounting garland frieze. This already manifests a tendency which was later to be almost

FIG. 11

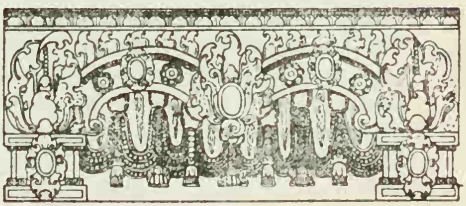


FIG. 11 — *Lintel in Prei Kmeng style; second half of the VIIth century.*

fatal to Khmer art; each new phase kept the innovations of the preceeding period, stylised them and added details of its own, thereby leading to an overloaded elaboration which might have led to disaster, if the position had not been saved by a sovereign sense of plastic values among the Khmer.

Sculpture

This is a time of iconographic innovation with the introduction of such new subjects as Brahma and the Bodhisattvas. But echoes of Sambor and Phnom Da persist. Some of the finest work is in the Museum at Phnom Penh; the Brahma from Sambor (N 22), the little buddhistic bronzes from Ak Yum (Angkor), and the Lakshmi from Prasat Thleang. The male statues generally keep the supporting arch. The elaborate scaffolding of tresses and curls of an earlier period have been stylised down to become ill-understood wigs. The round faces with emphatic features remain close to those of Sambor, except for the bronzes which have characteristics of their own, notably an almost horizontal line for the upper eyelids, and longer ears. The clothes are the most characteristic detail of this style; a simple rectangle of cloth falls from the waist over the hips, fixed by a buckle at the side. There are more often iconographic attributes in the hands. The female statues are in the Sambor tradition, but much feebler. Slimmer and thin waisted, they anticipate the outline later to become usual.

PLATE P. 67

THE PRASAT ANDET STYLE

Bhavavarman II was succeeded on the throne of Chen-la by Jayavarman I, who may have been his son. His reign began before 657 and lasted at least down to 681. He too extended his dominion which came to include almost the whole of southern Indochina. Many inscriptions and ruins date from his reign. But we are in as much doubt as in the case of his predecessor about where his capital was, unless one accepts the tentative suggestion that it may have been near Angkor on land subsequently covered by the artificial lake of the western Baray, and that the centre of his city is represented by the lowest stratum at Ak Yum. But an equally probable suggestion would place it, again in the neighbourhood of Angkor, at Roluos, and identify it with the first stratum of Trapeang Phong, which was also enlarged later by Jayavarman II. During his reign the cult of Siva still further increased in importance, and worship of the *linga* became the most important element. It would also seem that Mahayana Buddhism had fallen from favour, at any rate the statues become rarer.

The architecture of this period is a direct continuation of the Prei Kmeng style, of which it is merely the second phase, and, as already mentioned, both phases existed at the same time.

Sculpture

The most characteristic product of the Prasat Andet style, which by and large belongs to the first part of Jayavarman I's reign, is the sculpture in the round. All these statues are closely similar in style, and, though there are fewer of them, they are spread as far afield as those of the Prei Kmeng style. All are hinduistic. The most striking feature is the cylindrical mitre worn by the men, which is the final form taken by the wigs of Phnom

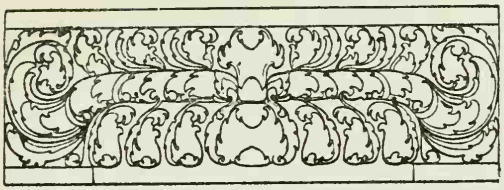


FIG. 12 — *Lintel in Kompong Preah style. Khmer art; VIIIth century.*

Da. This mitre comes down in a point on the forehead in front of the ears. The male heads are narrow, with clear-cut features and a moustache. The bodies are lean, almost sere, and muscles are not indicated. The narrow chest emphasises the breadth of the shoulders. The short loincloth is passed between the legs and fixed by a buckle at the side. A new and characteristic feature is a pocket on the left hip formed by the clumsily draped flap. Carved jewels make their appearance. The supporting arch is still is fashion, but there are some statues without it, and they are simply held firm by a stone panel on which the feet are carved in high relief. At the same time rather lovely female statues carry on the Sambor tradition with full breasts, slim waists, falling shoulders and, unfortunately, round inexpressive faces. Their skirts, bell-shaped, are carved with a pocket, and vertical folds in front and oblique ones on either hip. But instead of folds carved in relief they are more and more often represented by incised lines, so that the rendering becomes less and less logical.

The finest work in this style is the great Hari-Hara from Prasat Andet (Phnom Penh Museum) which rightly gives its name to the whole style. Its elegance and purity of line make this undoubtedly the most successful and beautiful of all Khmer statues. The understanding rendering of the muscles, on hips and back particularly, prove the sculptor's skill and discrimination, while the stylisation of the whole attests his maturity. It is astonishing how quickly Khmer artists attained such mastery.

PLATE P. 74

THE KOMPONG PREAH STYLE

After the reign of Jayavarman I, perhaps because his death without successor led to anarchy, the history of Chen-la becomes obscure, and this obscurity continues right through the 8th century down to the foundation of Angkor. The land became divided into "Land Chen-la" and "Water Chen-la", a natural enough return to the divison between Chen-la and Fu-nan. But only mainland Chen-la, with its centre at Sambor on the Mekong, kept the structure of a state. Elsewhere various obscure princes took what chances offered to carve out principalities whose extent and importance remain uncertain. We need not trouble with the chops and changes of their fortunes, except to record that they had a fatal effect on art which only too clearly degenerated.

The architecture of the time grows steadily poorer both in structure and in ornament. The brick towers still follow the Indian pattern, with quadrilateral groundplan and a vaulted roof. But they are of little interest.

PLATE P. 81 A typical example is the shrine dating from 706 at Prasat Phum Prasat (Kompong Thom). The general structure is ill conceived. The lintel is utterly jejune with the arcature entirely covered in foliage; the little

FIG. 12 columns have a narrow ring of flowers, typical of the period; and there are tendrils running up the pilasters, but they have none of the voluptuous suppleness of those of Sambor.

The sculpture, mostly dating from the first part of the 8th century, is, as already mentioned, a direct continuation of the Prei Kmeng and Prasat Andet style. There are not very many statues, perhaps because the cult of the *linga* was in the ascendant, or simply because the country was in decline. Anyhow the degeneration is clear. Sometimes the male statues have no supporting arch. Their faces are henceforward round, in apparent imitation of the female type, and quite without expression. Their headdress has become a stylised cylinder without any resemblance even to a mitre. The pocket in the clothes still persists, but is entirely altered by the incised rendering of folds. The women's faces have lost their smile, and the poor modelling of their busts is painful to see. A few very mediocre works date from the second half of the 8th century, and there are still traces of the same style in works from the beginning of the 9th century. But by and large the vein has been worked out.

Thus in the course of the 7th and 8th centuries the first great Khmer styles took shape, and also very quickly dried up. Thenceforth Indian models no longer matter or, at least, did not enter into the thoughts of local artists, who had nothing but the works of the immediately preceeding period in their own country to start from. Memories of India only survive in those elements, architectural especially, which were preserved, and constantly elaborated and assimilated. From the 8th century contacts with India had almost completely ceased, and thereafter Cambodia lived on its own resources.

A superb art took shape at Sambor and reached refined maturity at Prasat Andet, dependent always on the political fortunes of Chen-la. It too, like the political vigour of the country, withered at the root. But it prepared the way for the art of Angkor, just as the unified empire of Chen-la formed the basis of the political power of Cambodia.

CHAMPA During the 7th and 8th centuries Champa developed just as vigorously as Chen-la. From the first years of the 6th century a new dynasty had taken charge of its fate. Taking advantage of the momentary weakness of the Chinese under the Ch'en dynasty (557 to 589), the Cham rulers broke off paying tribute to their powerful northern neighbours. But the Sui and then the T'ang Emperors by menace of arms obliged them to pay it again. King Sambhuvarman (about 572 to 629) rebuilt the ruined

Prasat Phum Prasat, Kompong Thom, Cambodia. Southern facade. Khmer art; Kompong Preah style: 706 A.D. *Brick and stucco; height of the tower 10 m.*

temple erected by Bhadravarman at Mi-son, but nothing of this second temple remains. One of his successors, Prakasadharma (653 to about 686), who was descended through the female line from Isanavarman of Chen-la, spent his long reign embellishing Mi-son, and it is from this period that we have the first examples of Cham art known to us, though it must have been developing for some centuries before that. About the middle of the 8th century Champa passed through a serious crisis. The centre of power shifted to the south to the region of Phan-rang and Nha-trang, where a new dynasty was established. But this dynasty then had to face a new and more formidable danger; the sea raids of the Javanese. We will come back to that when we speak of the great change that came about in the Indianised parts of Indochina as a result of this Indonesian influence.

Mi-son E 1 style

The first works of Cham art known to us seem to date from the reign of Prakasadharma, and they have been grouped as "Mi-son E 1 style" after the tower on that site were they were found. We know of no trace of architecture connected with these sculptures, and it is possible that the Cham then mainly used wood.

This style has been dated by comparison with Khmer work, and evident similarities with the lintels in particular of Prei Kmeng style do suggest that they are roughly contemporary. That is natural enough for, apart from the alliances mentioned before, there were constant relations between the two countries from the time of Fu-nan. Moreover Champa extended its political influence over the eastern provinces of Fu-nan in Cochin China, when that great empire broke up under the blows of Chen-la. It is even possible that in the field of sculpture it was the Cham at that time who had most to teach the Khmer. The Cham had ruled the Bassak region before it became part of Chen-la. There may have been some Cham influence in the decoration of Phnom Bayang built in the reign of Bhava-varman II. In any case, as sculpture, Mi-son E 1 style works are far superior to corresponding things of Prei Kmeng style. The possible importance of contacts with Malaya has also been pointed out, and that is plausible enough in view of the seafaring activity of the Cham. Certainly the architectural remains of Chaiya and the sandstone pedestal from Alor Star in Malaya do have points of likeness to Cham sculpture of that date. But the reason for that might also be that both Cham and Malayan craftsmen closely followed Indian originals at that time, so that it would be a case of parallel development and not of mutual influence.

However that may be, Cham art at the beginning does strike one as very like Indian originals, originals mostly of post-Gupta date. The precise reason therefore is not clear. Shere lack of initiative cannot have been the cause, for the Cham were soon to show an abundance of that. Perhaps it was because their political evolution, compared with Fu-nan, was more hesitant, and they had not formed a community with standards of its own.

It might also be due to the fact that, apparently, the Hindu religion was particularly firmly established in Champa, and they may therefore have kept rigorously to orthodox models.

The only two known works of this first Cham style are a pediment with a representation of reclining Vishnu, and the wonderful pedestal supporting a *linga* probably from the very ruined little brick building of Mi-son E 1. The pediment with its flattened arcature, so that it is hardly more than an elaboration of a simple lintel, is very close indeed to the figured scenes on lintels of the first phase of the Prei Kmeng style. But in beauty of composition and execution it is undoubtedly superior, particularly the serene and majestic Vishnu. And the pedestal, now in the Tourane Museum, ranks as one of the finest works of Cham art. On one of its shorter sides there are two steps allowing access to the idol. The faces of these steps are ornamented with figures in relief including a dancing girl doing the splits whose movement is most admirably rendered. On the other sides are figures of ascetics, engaged in the various exercises of a hermit's life under fragile little erections which give us some idea of Cham architecture of that period. This decoration is admirable both in its sobriety and restraint, and in its subtlety and elegance. Of course it is in the direct line of Indian tradition, but there is that sense of life and rhythm which were to be the outstanding and very individual characteristics of Cham art.

PLATE P. 84

Between these works and the end of the 8th century practically no Cham sculpture is known to us, unless perhaps a group of Avalokitesvaras, in bronze and in stone, which do belong to the end of this period, and bear witness to the spread of Mahayana Buddhism which we mentioned a propos of the Prei Kmeng style. In any case these remains are enough to indicate an art, not in process of development, but already fully formed, and later to become one of the finest in Indochina.

THE MALAYAN PENINSULA AND SIAM

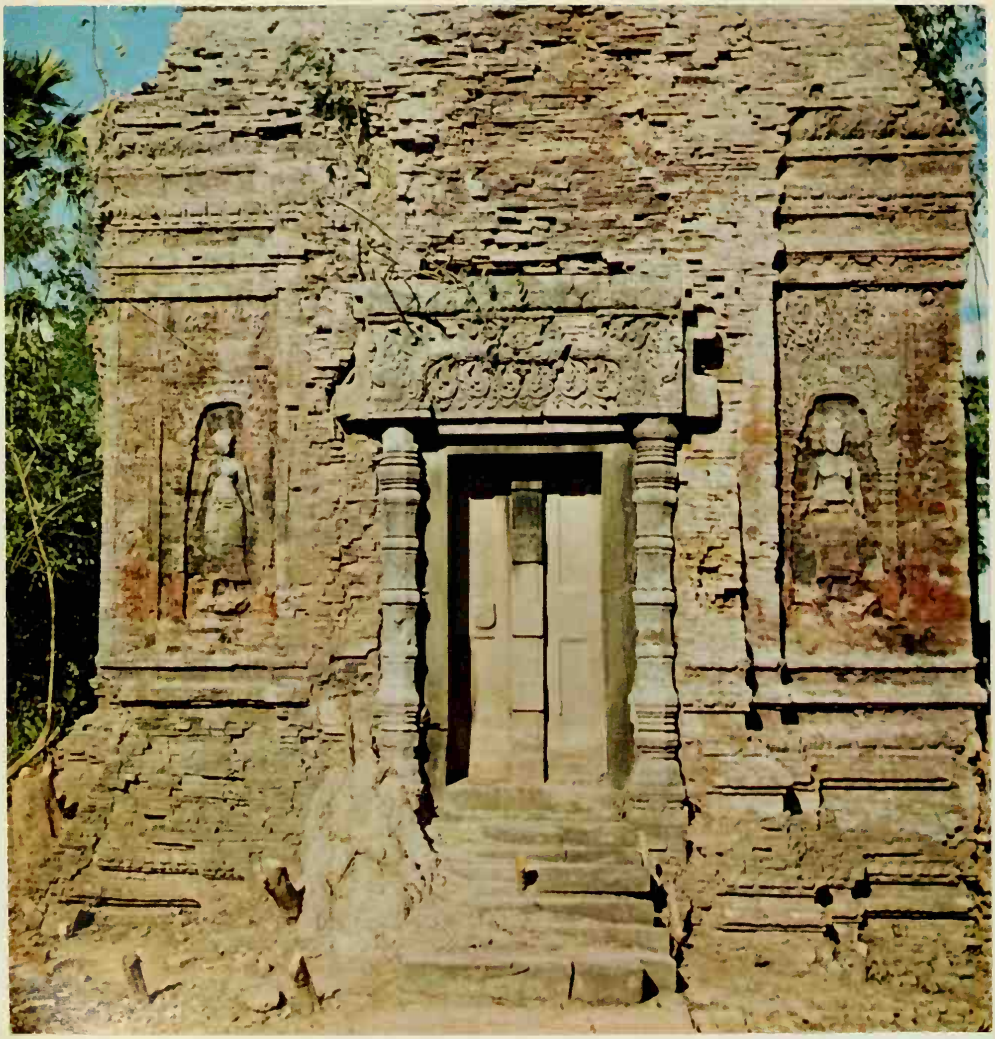
The kingdom of Dvaravati makes its appearance in the Menam delta at latest in the 7th century. At that time it included the sites of Pra Pathom and Pong Tuk, places already mentioned as among the first in Indochina with Buddhist works of art. Its influence also extended as far as the tableland of Korat, an area which was beginning to be dominated by the Khmer, approaching from the east. It is possible that Dvaravati came into existence as a political entity at the time of the break-up of Fu-nan whose sovereignty extended over all that part of Indochina. We do not know much about the art which developed there, except that the Mon type of Buddha, based on those we have already described, continued to develop, and may have influenced some Buddhist sculpture in Chen-la. The prosperity of the various states already mentioned in the Malayan peninsula continued. One interesting group of Hindu sculpture deserves a short mention. Some have sought to see in it, especially in the Vishnu from Takuapa, examples of the very first sculpture in south east Asia.

Pedestal from Mi-son E 1, Quang-nam, Central Vietnam. Panel decorating one side: ascetic playing on a flute. The pedestal supported a linga in the middle of a now ruined brick building. Cham art; Mi-son E 1 style: 2nd half of the 7th century. *Sandstone; height 0,60 m. Tourane Museum.*

Such a view probably needs modification. It seems that the last phase of the influence of Indian sculpture is represented in most of the works found there, and also in a group of statues coming from the mainland of Siam. In fact most of the sandstone Vishnus and Avalokitesvaras found in Siam, at Si Maha Phot (Prachinburi) and at Pechaburi, and in central Malaya, at Vieng Sra and Surat, seem to be derived from Pallava art or, more exactly, from that Indian style from which Pallava art originated in the first years of the 7th century. Moreover the Pallavas are known to have been great seafarers, especially during the reign of Narasimhavar-

man I (died about 655). The most interesting feature of these statues, particularly those of Vishnu, is that, instead of a supporting arch, they made use of lateral stays on either side of the legs, disguised under broad bows and folds of the dress falling over the belt. It is possible that, in central Indochina, these works influenced the first Chen-la sculpture, but they very soon vanished from the scene, leaving no successors. Their interest is chiefly historical, in that they show the variety of forms of plastic expression attempted in Indianised Indochina, and indeed in the whole of Indonesia at this time, for some statues of Vishnu from Java and Bali are similar to those found in Malaya.

At the beginning of the 9th century we shall find Indochina becoming united under the influence of two powerful forces, one after the other; Srivijaya and the Sailendra. This led to the unification under Angkor.



Trapeang Phong, Roluos, Angkor. Western facade of the central tower. Khmer art; transitional style between that of Kulên and Preah Ko; reign of Jayavarman III: 850 to 877. *Brick, sandstone and stucco; height of the tower 12 m.*

V. THE FOUNDATION OF ANGKOR

Towards the end of the 8th century the empire of Chen-la had broken up completely, and this is shown most clearly by the withering of its art. But the eight-hundred year old Indianised civilisation of the Khmer was by no means either exhausted or brought to a dead end. The crisis which it faced was more of a social and political nature. It seemed that the organisation of the first Indianised states, which were after all only small principalities, was unable to withstand the rapid expansion of Chen-la, and could not cope with the problems of administering so many peoples spread over so vast an area. It is probable that the complete interruption at that time in commercial relations with India, and indeed of international trade in general, deprived Chen-la of what had been one of the chief sources of prosperity for Fu-nan. Moreover the simple economy of Chen-la was not able to produce enough to mitigate the blow. A new political, social and economic organisation was therefore needed for a state which controlled all, or almost all, the low lying territory in southern Indochina. That is what in fact happened during the first half of the 9th century; the birth of Angkor meant a complete reorganisation of Khmer society, and of its ways of supporting itself. A real revolution took place, though our attention concentrated on the renewal of art and religion has allowed it to pass almost unnoticed. But art and religion are really expressions of that profound change in society, and would not have been the same without it.

THE ORIGINS OF ANGKOR

Having no literary sources, we do not know how this renaissance came about. But we can be sure that the Khmer themselves were responsible for it, for no foreign example would, without recourse to force, be strong enough to make a people change the internal structure of society. But Chen-la suffered no invasion. As we shall see, several exceptional personalities helped the movement on, and we are by no means inclined to underrate the effect of individuals on the fate of nations. But that is all guess-work based on our theories about the "laws" of human evolution, and there is no document to support it.

The only factor of which we have historical evidence, is an external one; the influence of Indonesia. Perhaps just because it is the only clear element in the picture, we tend to exaggerate its importance, however still we think that it has not been sufficiently stressed, and that it probably did play a decisive part in the birth of Angkor.

Srivijaya and the Sailendra

The rise of the great empire of Srivijaya in the middle of the 7th century has already been mentioned à propos of Indonesian art. Based on Palembang it soon came to include the whole of western Indonesia, Sumatra

Avalokitesvara from Chaiya, Suratthani, Siam. Art of Srivijaya: middle of the 8th century. *Bronze; height 0,63 m. National Museum, Bangkok.*

and the Malayan peninsula in particular. Chinese writers have recorded the splendour of its civilisation and the extent to which Buddhism flourished there. It would seem that Srivijaya succeeded to the commercial hegemony of Fu-nan and control of the southern seas, which may explain why Chen-la could not hold that position. From the second quarter of the 8th century onwards power passed to the great dynasty of the Sailendra in central Java, and they built wonderful temples, from Chandi Kalasan to Borobudur, which are the finest Buddhist monuments in all Asia. The rise of the Sailendra rulers, who styled themselves "King of the Mountain" and Maharaja (great king), claiming a universal supremacy, is one of the

most important political events in the history of south east Asia. They regarded themselves as direct heirs of the rulers of Fu-nan, and it has recently been suggested that they were in fact descended from those kings who may have taken refuge in Java when Fu-nan was conquered by Chen-la. In any case, even if they did not, in reality, achieve all the conquests to which their inscriptions lay claim, throughout the 8th century the Sailendra kings did dominate the southern part of the China Sea. Of course Malaya, and the district round Ligor in particular, was in their domain. One finds them raiding the Cham coast in 774, and they burnt the Po Nagar shrine at Nha-trang. Again in 787 they burnt the shrine at Phan-rang. A landing in Tonkin in 767 was less successful. There is also reason to suppose that they overcame one of the last kings of Chen-la; at any rate they had a definite claim to sovereignty over that land, for even the Khmer recognised it. By and large, the Sailendra period is one of the most important happenings in the history of south east Asia.

The expansion of Javanese civilisation

But the spread of their civilisation is much more important even than their political fortunes. The glory of Buddhist art under the Sailendra is well known. It springs from the great flowering of Mahayana faith started under the Pala kings, and of which the Indonesians were missionaries. Works of the Srivijaya style in Malaya are due to it, and it may have had something to do with the already mentioned Prei Kmeng revival of Mahayana sculpture. The two splendid torsoes of Avalokitesvara found at Chaiya and now in the Bangkok Museum, date from a little later, perhaps the middle of the 8th century. There are other works of the same school which were almost as fine, such as the Avalokitesvara found in a tin mine in Perak and now in the Taiping Museum. Such works show very clear Pala influence, even though having come through Java it was second-hand. They probably had an influence on the formative period at Angkor. Probably also most of the archaeological remains discovered in central Malaya and Perak date from this period, and not as generally supposed from the earliest period of Indianisation. That, in our view, applies to the little temple carefully excavated and reconstructed recently by the Sungei Batu Pahat, in northern Perak. Little stone caskets containing golden Sivaite symbols were found in the foundations, and they strangely recall the "nine chamber reliquaries" of Indonesia.

PLATE P. 88

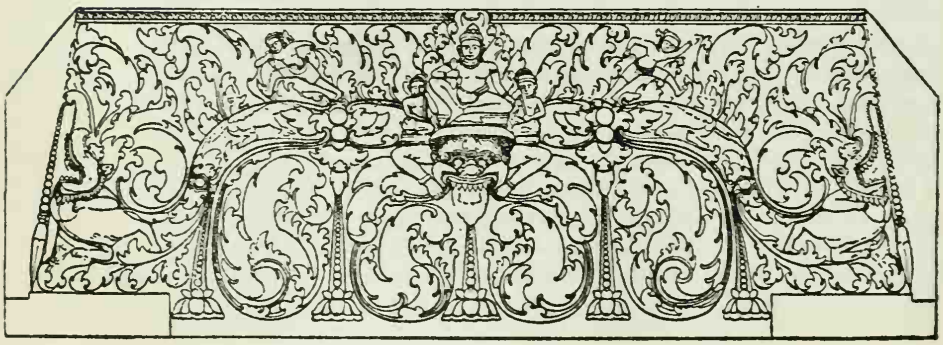
It was not only the worship of Buddha and Siva which Indonesia thus propagated. The royal ritual of the Sailendra and of all the Hindu traditionalists who took refuge in the east of Java, from the title "King of the Mountain" to the importance attached to the *linga* as a symbol of power, and the posthumous worship of the rulers, are largely derived from Java, and were among the sources of the institutions of Angkor. In brief, the Sailendra showed Chen-la the example, dignified by the finest art in Asia at that time, of a great civilisation centred round the royal power. The career of Jayavarman II, who lived in Java, illustrates this. He was

a prince in some way loosely connected with the ancient dynasties of Cambodia. For reasons that remain uncertain he lived at the court of the Sailendra, perhaps as prisoner, perhaps as a docile pupil, until shortly before his return to Cambodia about 790. He returned to his country steeped in Javanese culture, and no doubt eager to imitate it. It is worth stressing that his return corresponded with a period of weakening of the power of the Javanese kings, and that may have been the reason why he came back.

As king he strove to pull together the disorganised territories of Chen-la. The capitals which he successively founded provide impressive evidence of the stages of his progress. Indrapura, in the east of Kompong Cham, perhaps the modern Banteay Prei Nokor, came first. Thereafter he moved to the provinces north of the lakes, which he seldom left, as they became the centre of his power. He established himself at Kuti, near the modern Kutisvara in the Angkor district itself; at Hariharalaya, the modern Roluos; at Amarendrapura, probably a city built round Ak Yum and later flooded by the western Baray; and finally, in 802, he founded Mahendraparvata on the Phnom Kulên, some 18 miles north east of Angkor.

The choice of that site was characteristic. Fundamentally it is uninhabitable, and was to be abandoned very soon. His intention was above all symbolic. To be a "King of the Mountain" and a universal sovereign, Jayavarman II simply chose a mountain as the most effective equivalent of Mount Meru, the throne of the gods, and especially of Indra, king of the gods, who was the model with whom he identified himself. He expressly summoned a learned Brahmin conversant with that ritual, who recited the sacred texts and erected a *linga,* the emblem of the god and supreme power, Siva. This *linga,* source of all power, in which the king's

FIG. 13 — *Lintel in Kulên style; first half of the IXth century.*



soul dwelt, was to remain the emblem of the Khmer kingdom. By these acts the performer of the sacrifice brought it about that "the land of the Cambodians was no longer dependent on Java, and had only one ruler whose sway was universal", as the inscriptions record. Jayavarman II was therefore the founder of the power of Angkor in a religious as well as a political sense. Not only did he free his country from vassalage to Java, a tie which would not have been so solemnly denounced if it had not been strongly resented, but he also based his power on religion, making the king's function legitimate through some transcendent divine delegation. That was, of course, an old idea both in India and in Indochina too. But the public solemnity of the ritual proved the necessity to renew ties which had loosened during the decadence of Chen-la. Indeed it was more important than anything known before and afterwards it was something deeply felt. For, and this is quite exceptional, we possess no inscription of Jayavarman II himself. All our knowledge is due to the records of his successors. There was, probably enough, on their part an element of propaganda. But it clearly emerges that the kings of Angkor felt that the legitimacy of their power sprang directly from this act which was, in the full sense of the word, the creation of their authority.

When this fundamental rite had been performed, Jayavarman continued to reside at Roluos where he died in 850. His son, Jayavarman III, succeeded him, and lived there until his death in 877. He apparently excelled in nothing but hunting elephants. Nonetheless the reign of Jayavarman II, consolidated by his son, completely altered the course of Khmer development. The country is again unified under one solidly established and, no doubt, uncontested authority. Its centre was in the very heart of the land, on that northern shore of the lakes which was at an equal distance from all the boundaries of the Khmer empire, connected by the river with the sea, surrounded by fertile soil, forests full of game and quarries of stone. Finally a particular form of the worship of Siva had taken shape, and that explained the whole ordering of society, both morally and intellectually. A vigorous flowering of art came to give visual expression to this renaissance.

THE KULÊN STYLE

There are a good many ruins of Jayavarman II's buildings in almost all his capitals. They are found at Sambor Prei Kuk (tower C 1), at Banteay Prei Nokor, at Roluos (the northern tower of Prasat Prei Prasat and the second state of Svay Pream), but the most important are on the Kulên.

Architecture

The simple brick towers are not very different from those of the preceeding periods and are not as fine as those of Sambor. They are quadrilateral in plan, with a door to the east, and sham doors on the other sides for symmetry. It would seem that the scheme by which the upper storeys reproduced the ground floor on diminishing scales, became usual, and that the vaulted roofs derived from India were given up. Perhaps the tower of Krus Preah Aram Rong Chen, which seems to have been the

place on the Kulên where the sacred *linga* was housed, strove to imitate a mountain in the form of a step pyramid. But the hill itself was really the very concrete symbol of Mount Meru.

Nevertheless it is a plausible hypothesis that the temple-mountain scheme which became so popular later and was to be the great glory of Khmer architecture, was invented in the reign of Jayavarman II. The second stage of the temple of Ak Yum, which is in the centre of the town now under the western Baray that may be Amarendrapura, might date back to about the year 800 A.D. It was then a brick pyramid in three stages crowned with towers arranged in a quincunx. On that wide plain by the lakes it would stand for the sacred mountain on which the *linga,* emblem of Siva, was erected. When this style was coming to its end, under Jayavarman III, the towers of Prasat Kok Po (tower A and B) and, more particularly, the second stage of the main tower at Trapeang Phnom are good illustrations of the architectural ideas of this time.

PLATE P. 86

It is especially in the field of ornament that the Kulên style deliberately broke new ground. It seems that Jayavarman II had summoned all the artists in his land in order to revive an art worthy of his grandiose designs. Even on the Kulên there is one shrine, that of Prasat Damrei Krap, composed of three towers on a single terrace, which is so clearly Cham in character, in a style contemporary with Hoa-lai, that one might think it was built by artists coming from that land. And it may be that in that way the monarch associated the neighbouring kingdom in his scheme of liberation from Java, or in his plans for a unified land. All the other details of this art bear testimony to the same preoccupations, whether it be taking up again motifs of the ancient art of Chen-la, or deliberate borrowings from the aesthetic discoveries of neighbouring lands.

The lintels especially, and this is in complete contrast to those of the Kompong Preah style, bear witness to this revival. Again, as at Sambor, the central arcature is at its extremities finished by truculent *makaras,* and it is enriched with little horsemen darting out from the foliage. Some elements are borrowed from Javanese art; such as the head of the *kala,* a monster familiar in the islands, and *makaras* spitting out a jewelled pendant over the ends of the arch, but other *makaras* spitting out a doe is a motif which comes from Champa. The little columns are generally polygonal, and decorated with four rings and eight fillets, the rings being ornamented with a leaf on every face. The pediments are influenced by Cham art, with their low profile and the tympanum decorated with the figure of a god in the middle.

FIG. 13

Sculpture

Much more than the architecture, but still less than the carving in relief, Kulên sculpture is a revival after the aridity of the Kompong Preah style. The earliest works, such as the lovely Vishnu from Rup Arak, still keep the supporting arch. Later they were to do without it, relying only on clubs to the side. The bodies with their narrow hips are fairly well

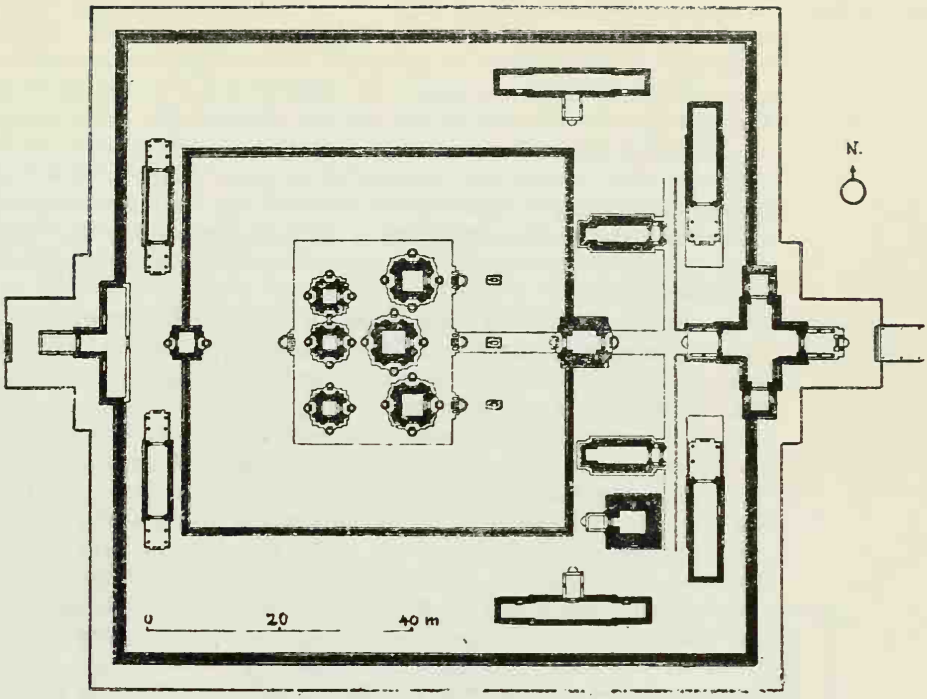


FIG. 14 — *Plan of Preah Ko; 879 A.D.*

modelled, but tend to be stereotyped and rather too plump. The large calm faces have a short moustache; the hair is brought forward in a characteristic point over the temples, and there is an increasing tendency to represent the eyebrows by one straight sharp horizontal line. All wear a cylindrical mitre. Towards the end of this phase appear the jewelled diadems which came later to be the basic ornament of Khmer sculpture. The clothes are short, and still have the stylised pocket over the hip, and there is now an anchor-shaped fold in front. We know of no female statues from this period.

In a sense the art of Jayavarman II's reign is not outstanding, and falls short of the perfection of Prasat Andet sculpture, and of the sumptuous architecture of Sambor. However, when compared to the Prei Kmeng style or, even more, to that of Kompong Preah, it deserves to be called, as we have done, a renaissance, and it is a worthy expression of the fundamental change brought about by the great King.

INDRAVARMAN

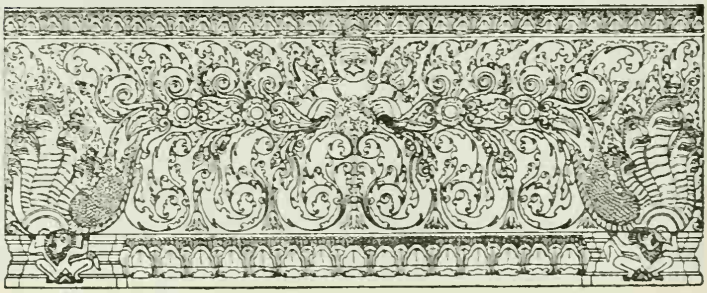
It was the second successor of the creator of Angkor, Indravarman (877–889), who really established its effective power both socially and economically. In all probability he was a usurper, but his reign was nevertheless peaceful. His authority was recognised everywhere, and reached as far as Cochin China, U Bon in Siam, and, perhaps, Champa. He was moreover a profoundly cultivated man, and had studied as a disciple of the Brahmin Sivasoma who followed the doctrine of the great Hindu philosopher Sankara, the restorer of Hindu orthodoxy. The King, a fervent worshipper of Siva, encouraged the development of the posthumous cult of the ruler, a cult no doubt derived from Java, which had already been established by Jayavarman II.

Economic organisation

The essential step forward made during his reign was the creation of the "city" of Angkor as a way of exploiting the land. In Fu-nan there had been a wonderful network of canals, but up to that time the Khmer had been content with a relatively precarious agriculture. We have seen that they used irrigation on a modest scale, and, in Chen-la, at least knew how to store water against the dry season in tanks and moats, generally by diverting the flow of perennial streams. But, by and large, inhabited sites in inland Cambodia before the time of Indravarman, show a few reservoirs dug out nearby, and that is all. That was just how Roluos appeared in the reign of Jayavarman II. It is moreover important to note that the region round Angkor could not be properly exploited without abundance of water, and that neither streams nor rain could be relied on to provide it by themselves.

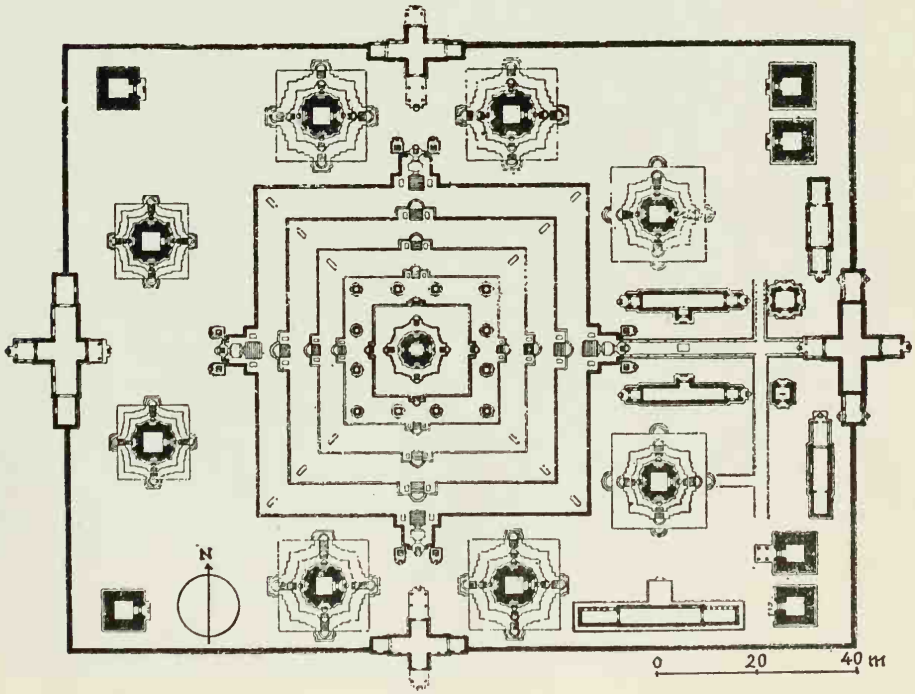
Indravarman continued to reside at Roluos, and we find that he created a really wonderful irrigation system there. What models did he follow? That we do not know. Perhaps it was simply that, faced by the pressure of a growing population who could not be fed from the rice fields flooded

FIG. 15 — *Lintel in Preah Ko style; fourth quarter of the IXth century.*



by the rain, it occurred to him to revive the ancient Chen-la "captive water" technique on a scale ten times as great. In any case Angkor owed to him a system of irrigation, which was so intelligently adapted to the lie of the land, so supple and effective, that it was adopted thereafter without alteration, and for three centuries assured the outstanding prosperity of the country. The first step in the King's reign was the creation of an immense artificial lake, called Indratakata ("Indra's lake"), which has now dried up, but still bears the name of the *baray* ("baray" in Cambodian means "artificial lake") of Lolei. It was 4,000 yards long and 850 wide. It was formed by earthen dikes which held the water from one of the two rivers in the region, the Stung Roluos. Below, over land lower than the water level thus created, irrigation canals distributed the water over the paddy fields, simply making use of the slope of the ground. Moreover

FIG. 16 — *Plan of Bakong; 881 A.D.*



the water was very intelligently used both to mark out the city and to serve its needs, by filling the moats. So the townsmen could help themselves as they required.

In the first place the waters from the Baray of Lolei filled the moats round the temple of Preah Ko, built to the south of Lolei. Then, still following the natural slope of the land from north to south, it fed the double ring of moats round the King's temple-mountain, the Bakong. After that it filled the moats of the royal palace, Prasat Prei Monti, and finally passing through the paddy fields it reached the lake and poured into it. Naturally these canals were also useful for boats, and, in particular, made it possible to come straight from the lakes to the capital. Moreover, if the moats

Bakong, Roluos, Angkor. Eastern facade. There are statues of the royal founder and his wives in the little tower in the foreground. Khmer art; Preah Ko style; founded by Indravarman in 881. *Sandstone and brick; height to the summit of the central tower 34 m.*

were dug out before any other building was done, the earth thrown up may have been used to make the platform on which the temple was to be built. And when it came to building the temple, there was an ideal means of access on every side for bringing up the materials needed, in particular the enormous blocks of stone required.

The city of the Angkor period is thus seen to be more than a simple concentration of inhabitants with a temple for the gods who protect it. It is a rational way of exploiting the soil, using natural resources to the best effect, making up for their scarcity, and even for their absence. Its foundation was therefore, in the etymological sense of the word, vital. Without it, it would not have been possible to bring together the substantial numbers of soldiers, officials and craftsmen required to defend the land, to administer it, and to erect and maintain the great royal temples. Without it, Cambodia could not have supported the enormously increased population, or produced the surplus necessary for a great nation stratified into specialised callings. Without it, either the soil would have been quickly exhausted, or the country's expansion would have been held back. Throughout the succeeding centuries the great rulers followed the same path, by founding new cities, which in fact meant extending the irrigation system. Far from being a manifestation of megalomania, these gigantic undertakings, which followed close on one another often overlapping, increased the zone of cultivation and multiplied wealth.

Likewise, these formidable undertakings, which could not have been planned, completed or maintained by any state that was not exceptionally strong and centralised, added to the authority and almost magic power of the king. He was indeed the universal ruler in the image and by the delegation of the gods. He created all life by watering the land and not allowing the sun to dry it up. He ordained the seasons and the calendar of agricultural labour, and he directed the rain and the flowing streams into the canals. If anything untoward happened on the earth, it was he who set it right. If any change occurred in the universal order, it was he who intervened with the gods by means of the appropriate ritual performed in the temples which he had erected for that purpose in the centre of the city. Everything revolved around him. How could he, who was the pivot of the universe, not be clothed in superhuman dignity? Himself a fervent believer, how could he fail to desire, at least after his death, to become one of those gods whose functions he performed on earth? So naturally we find that the Khmer sovereigns prolonged the very concrete and effective part which they played in this world, by establishing forms of worship which would be continued after their death in order to insure their deification. Hence the temple in which they were priests in their lifetime, became their temple in death. Statues of them were often erected there with the features of the god to whom they wished to be assimilated. Even in some cases their ashes might be deposited there.

By this time we find the whole Khmer order of society perfected. Under Indravarman, Jayavarman II's work took root; Angkor has been founded, and will continue to grow. Better even than his inscriptions, the monuments of Indravarman bear witness to this impressive second phase.

THE PREAH KO STYLE

Preah Ko, the first shrine erected in 879 by Indravarman to the memory of Jayavarman II and of his own ancestors, has given its name to the art of his reign. Later, in 881, he constructed Bakong, his mountain temple. These two buildings illustrate all the changes which took place in his reign, the economic effects of which we have already mentioned. This economic aspect is particularly to the fore in the new and grandiose scale on which the setting of the temple has been planned. The canals and great expanses of water created by the Khmer were used by them to good effect to enhance the beauty of their architecture. This was natural and logical, for the sanctuaries were the symbols of the universal order itself. But there was something of genius in the way the artists of Angkor exploited it. One cannot sufficiently stress that they and the French architects of the 16th and 17th century alone in the world understood this "architecture of space", one of the most sophisticated of art forms.

Architecture

Preah Ko is on the eastern side of a vast enclosure which perhaps surrounded part of the capital. There are six towers on its single terrace; three

FIG. 14

in a row in front contain the statues of the deified ancestors of the king; three others behind are consecrated to the female line. There is no great novelty in these towers. Their only advantage, and it is an important one, is that they have kept a great deal of the decoration carved in the stucco. This decoration is wonderful; vigorous branches, foliage, golden rings and blue lotus cover the pilasters. The top of the panels of the wall are decorated with exquisite little people balancing on rings held in the jaws of a monster. One new feature; slabs of sandstone are fixed into the lower part of the wall with figures of protecting divinities carved in high relief. They clearly show the influence of Javanese art both in their many jewels and in the bristly hair of the male divinities.

The lintels adopt and refine the innovations of the Kulên style. The central arch is always covered by a branch of foliage, and it often ends

FIG. 15

in a *naga's* head. Charming little horsemen dart out from it. Above there is a row of half-length figures of worshippers. The pediments are decorated with scenes of two or three people. The temple of Lolei, built in 893 by his successor at the time of the death of Indravarman, continues this style, and to some extent codifies it. It consists of four similar brick towers with delightful lintels.

The Temple-mountain

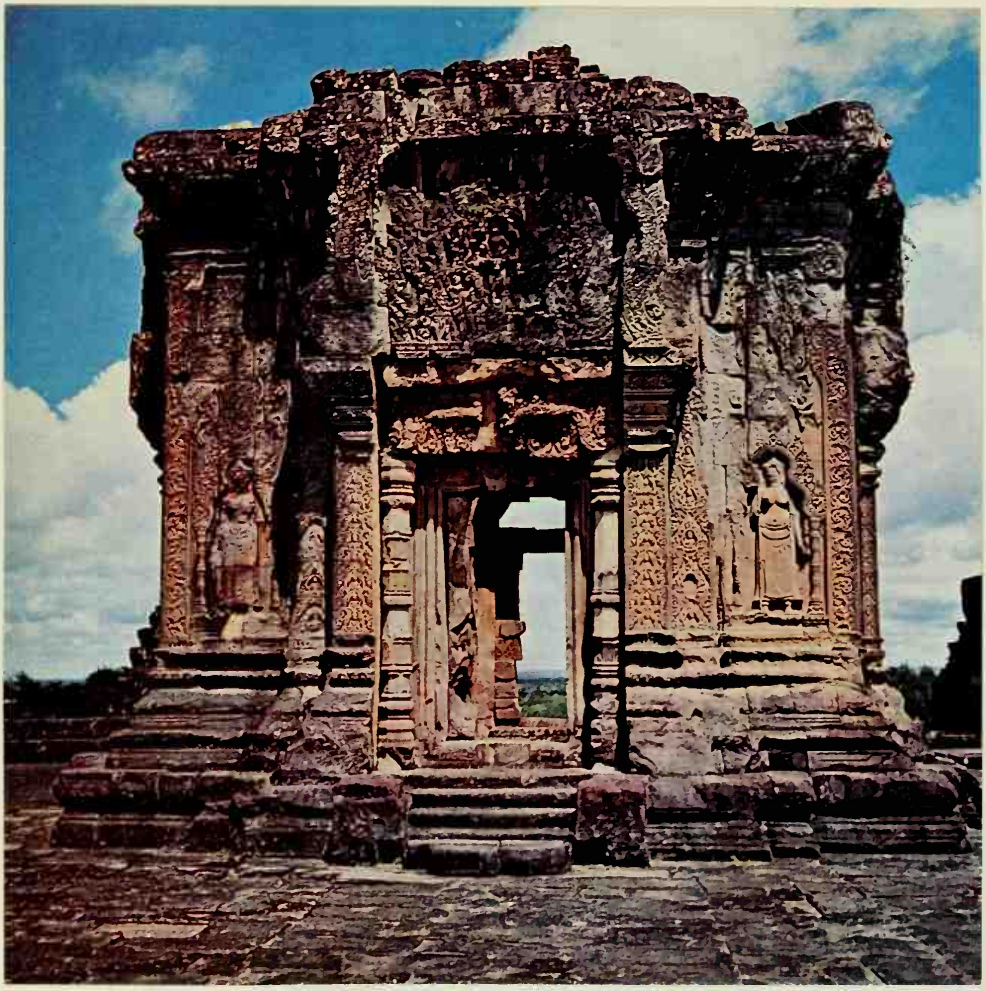
In every respect the most important monument of Indravarman is the temple-mountain of Bakong, which he dedicated in 881, when his capital had been built and his duties towards his ancestors performed, to glorify his life's work and thought. We should mention that the first attempt of this sort may have been Ak Yum under Jayavarman II. But Indravarman

gave it incomparable éclat. Once he had rooted his people in the middle of the great plain of Roluos which spreads out on the same level as the lakes, the king nonetheless wished to erect the *linga* of the supreme lord in the place where his throne should be, that is, on the summit of Mount Meru. For that purpose he created from nothing an artificial mountain of sandstone. Bakong is a pyramid formed by five quadrilateral superimposed terraces evenly decreasing in size (76 by 74 yards at the base and 23 by 20 at the top). The floor of the highest terrace is 47 feet above the ground. The original shrine on top has perished, and what we see today is a much later reconstruction dating from the 12th century, but its decoration deliberately imitates that of the time of Indravarman. The terraces represent the superimposed worlds which constitute the universe. Stone elephants at the corners insure its stability. Small sandstone towers round the edge probably housed protecting divinities, or perhaps represented the various planets. Round the base annexed shrines and brick buildings completed the plan. One such tower held the King's own statue. Finally two successive stone enclosures and two moats protected this highly sacred spot. Causeways crossing the inner moat, running east and west in line with the main gates, gave access to the temple. They are lined with huge sandstone *nagas*. They are as yet very clumsy, crawling on the ground and seeming with some difficulty to lift up their heavy hoods, but they adumbrate that wonderful creation of Khmer architecture, the *naga* balustrade. Originally they were pursued by colossal free-standing *garudas*, illustrating the classical Indian theme of the battle between *garudas* and *nagas*.

FIG. 16

PLATE P. 96

Fundamentally the architectural means employed are comparatively simple. But the effect is nonetheless staggering. The pyramid of Bakong is one of the first of the great creations of Khmer architecture and it remains one of the most powerful. How it came to be built is still a problem. It certainly fills a place in that evolution of ideas which, as we have seen, was the guiding light in the creation of the civilisation of Angkor. Certainly it may have been inspired by Ak Yum. But nonetheless Bakong does seem to spring out of nothing. However, contrary to what is often supposed, in the field of architecture, and more especially in the field of religious art, creations springing from the void are extremely rare. Moreover all through this period we have seen that Java exercised a manifold influence in every field. But no one, it would seem, has yet realised the astonishing resemblance between Bakong and Borobudur. The use of stone; the plan of superimposed terraces of decreasing size ascended by axial stairs which are sheltered by a pavilion at the base; numerous details of the decoration; the likeness is indeed striking, if one remembers that one is a Buddhist and the other a Sivaite shrine. May it not simply have been that, in building his great royal shrine of Bakong, Indravarman hoped, at least, to equal the achievements of the Sailendra kings, whose



Bakheng, Angkor. Southern facade of the main tower-sanctuary. Khmer art; Bakheng style; founded by Yasovarman in 893. *Sandstone; present height of the tower 5,5 m.*

yoke the Khmer rulers patently wished to shake off, and of whose power they were rivals? In our view the answer should probably be affirmative, but there are still certain problems of chronology to resolve before it can be regarded as certain.

Sculpture

Preah Ko sculpture marks the last stage in the evolution of free-standing statues, which began at Phnom Da. Henceforward there are no props or artifices. Even the *garudas* chasing the *nagas* on the embankment at Bakong are free-standing, and prove that artists then dared to represent movement in space like this. This is something most remarkable; the only attempt, apart from the Greeks, of this sort in the world. The Preah Ko sculptors also invented new formulas such as groups of statues. Of these the most beautiful is the statue of Indravarman tenderly embraced by his two favourite wives, which is housed in one of the brick towers attached to Bakong. At the same time there is the beginning of a tendency towards standardisation. Male bodies become fatter with very ugly legs. They are still, however, slightly reclining on one leg. The faces are still very like those of Kulên, but have one new feature, a fringe of beard. The clothes are smooth, still with the pocket and the anchor shaped fold in front. One finds a tranquil harmony in the voluptuous forms of the women. There is a bunch of vertical pleats in the skirt falling from the belt, a small pleated hem and triangular fold on the left hip. All such statues now wear a diadem.

PLATE P. 96

But the most important new feature are the reliefs. At first they consist of figures on sandstone panels let into the brick towers. At Bakong they are true bas-reliefs. Originally the supporting wall of the fifth terrace was entirely covered with a frieze of mythological scenes, but time has almost completely effaced what must have been one of the high points of Khmer art. Only a few fragments remain to prove its worth and our loss. One example is the astounding mythological scene in which a daemon by one mighty blow brings the emblem crashing down from the enemy's standard. Here is movement, life and plastic sense, which all bear witness, more clearly than the plan or details of execution, to inspiration from Java. Here Indravarman has at least equalled the achievements of the Sailendra, and his art is worthy of his genius as a civilising force.

Frontispiece

YASOVARMAN

Yasovarman, the son of Indravarman, succeeded in 889. On his mother's side Yasovarman was descended from the most ancient royal families of Fu-nan. His tutor had been a Brahmin from one of the priestly families appointed by Jasovarman II to attend to the worship of the royal linga.

As the son of Indravarman, descended from the universal sovereigns of Fu-nan, and the spiritual disciple of Jayavarman II, he united in his person every element which had presided over the birth of Angkor. It was his great work to bind all these elements together and widen their

influence by many new foundations and the constructions of wonderful buildings, which gave the Cambodia of Angkor final shape.

We have already mentioned that one of his first foundations was the temple of Lolei, erected in memory of his father in the middle of the lake which brought life to Roluos. He thus definitely established the worship of dead kings. However Indravarman's Roluos could not be enlarged, for it had already come to occupy all the cultivable land in that area down to the lakes. In order to enrich his country with more cultivable land, and perhaps also to outdo his father, for vanity was not the least of the defects of Khmer kings, Yasovarman turned his attention to the exploitation of the second river in the district of Angkor to the north west of Roluos. He used the same technique of storing water in bulk, and putting it to use down the natural slope of the land. But he did it on a scale six times as great. His artificial lake named Yasodharatataka (the modern western Baray) was 4½ miles long and more than a mile across. It was fed by the Siemreap River which poured in at the north east and out at the south west corner. From that point the bed of the river was dug out to form a canal which was also the eastern moat of the capital, Yasodharapura, called after its founder. The plan thereof had been ingeniously contrived so that a natural hill, the Phnom Bakheng, should be in the centre. Immense moats surrounded it on all sides with a perimeter of about 4 miles. Within this enclosure and outside over all the land sloping down to the lakes, rice fields were watered from this supply. The area made available for cultivation was six times as large as that at Indravarman's Roluos. And the scheme was so successfully planned that it remained the centre of almost all the later Angkor capitals.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

Apart from this masterly complex, we know hardly anything about other works of Yasovarman. His inscriptions prove that his power stretched from Laos to the coast of the Gulf of Siam. It is possible that he had to repulse another sea invasion of the Indonesians. He was especially active in multiplying religious foundations, both hermitages near all the places of worship in the kingdom, and monasteries for all the great sects, including those of Buddhist inspiration. He died in 900 and, in accordance with the tradition established since the time of Jayavarman II, he was given a posthumous Sivaite name.

THE BAKHENG STYLE

The temple which he erected in 893 on the hill of Bakheng in the centre of his grandiose capital, has given its name to the art of Yasovarman's reign. It applies with a mastery born of experience, the principles suggested by Bakong. Five terraces, very sober in outline, are superimposed on a square plan; it is 83 yards at the base, 51 at the top, and 40 feet high. The axial stairs no longer have gate-pavilions at the bottom, which accentuates the purity of the pyramid vigorously outlined by contrasting shadows. A quincunx of five towers composes the shrine on the summit. For the first time in Khmer art they are entirely built of sandstone. There are

FIG. 17

PLATE P. 100

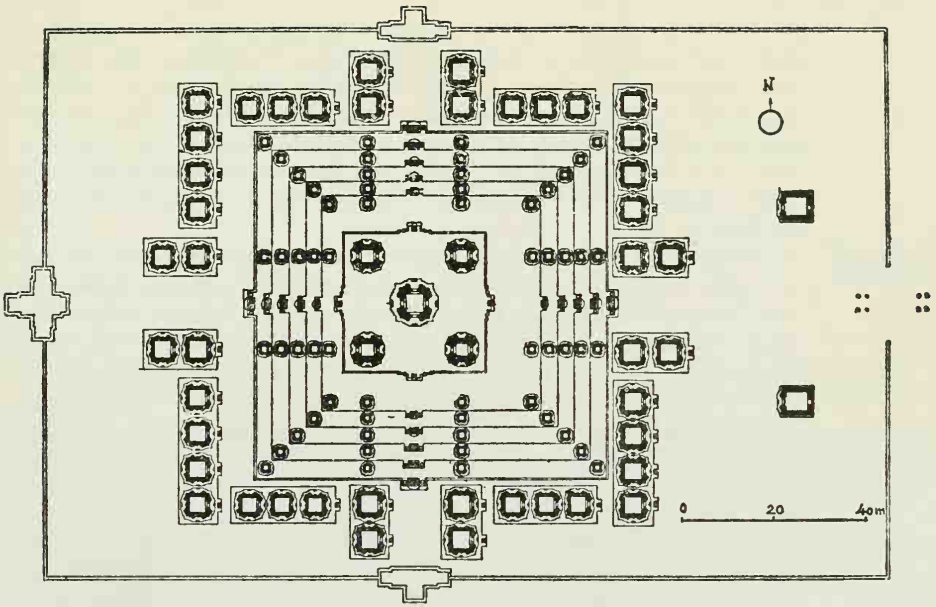


FIG. 17 — *Plan of Bakheng; 893 A.D.*

subsidiary towers on the terraces, as at Bakong, but more numerous and important.

This plan corresponds to a remarkably subtle symbolism, the product of an elaborate civilisation. The Bakheng is indeed a map of heaven and of the universe. There are one hundred and eight towers symmetrically arranged round the one hundred and ninth, which is the main tower-shrine in the centre of the summit. In one aspect it is a representation of Mount Meru. Like the sacred mountain, it has seven levels, the ground level, five terraces and summit. The towers are so arranged that, when looked at from the middle of one side, only thirty three can be seen at once, rising right up to the summit. Now in Indian mythology Mount Meru is inhabited by thirty three divinities, dwelling in seven heavens, including the supreme lord. Moreover one hundred and eight is four times twenty seven, thereby representing the four phases of the moon and the twenty seven lunar mansions, that is the days. Thus the whole year is given material form. In the Indian system sixty also stood for the complete circle of time, for that was believed to be the number of years it took Jupiter to return to its initial position. And the towers are disposed

in two series of sixty. So, as well as Mount Meru, we have here an astronomical calendar in stone, showing from every point of the compass the positions and paths of the planets, and the passage of time. We must not forget that we are in the tropics, and that therefore in the course of the year the sun shines particularly on each of the four faces in turn. Both as a building and as a symbol of time, the Bakheng is the most perfect expression of the conceptions which from thenceforth held sway in Angkor.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

Apart from the Bakheng, Yasovarman in his very short reign only erected two other sanctuaries on the hills round Angkor, the Phnom Krom and the Phnom Bok. They are simply three towers in a row, but all entirely built of sandstone. In all of them we can see the development from Preah Ko ornament, but this time all carved in sandstone. The change of material brought a change of technique, which becomes more supple. There is a refinement and an exquisite rhythm in these motifs, which we

PLATE P. 100

shall only find again in the style of Angkor Vat. The lovely garlands running over the surface of the stone, the ornament of the landings with little people gracefully interlaced, and the goddesses decorating the walls are all a joy to see. One is particularly grateful for the empty backgrounds which allow the composition to stand out, a restraint which was not to be maintained in Khmer art, tending as it does to become stifling.

Compared to those of Preah Ko, the lintels are more quiet and sober. There are fewer little charmers among the leaves. The middle of the branch bends under the weight of some fine decorative motif. There are more rings on the little octagonal columns, and each flat surface is ornamented with a leaf between two half leaves of the same size. The pediments are generally fringed by an arch ending in heads of *makaras,* and on the tympana a divinity is surrounded by leaves.

Sculpture

The sculpture is the most hieratic in Khmer art, with no bend of the body and an absolute frontality. The male figures are slimmer, with faces in the Preah Ko tradition, but more severe, with a sharp horizontal line to represent the eyebrows. Clothes are always pleated, with the same pocket and, in front, a fold which is now double. The hem of the women's skirts is twisted back over the belt. The diadem often supports a cylindrical mesh of tresses.

So it took a century, between the foundation of Angkor by Jayavarman II in 802 and the death of Yasovarman in 900, for the civilisation of Angkor to take shape. But what a long road has been traversed. Largely inspired by Javanese ideas, and in the beginning expressing themselves in forms borrowed from the Sailendra, the kings of Angkor unified their country and established their authority over all that had once been Fu-nan or Chen-la. They consecrated their power by a ritual which was soon to become a real national religion, and to make them gods both here on earth and after their death, and based the prosperity of the country on one of

the most remarkable ways of exploiting the land ever discovered in antiquity. They brought harmony to this new world by a complete explanation of the universe, and finally gave expression to this universal order in an art of wonderful strength and scope, almost without parallel outside Egypt. Such was the Angkor whose genius was to eclipse all the other civilisations of Indochina.

Baksei Chamkrong, Angkor. Eastern facade. Khmer art; transitional between Bakheng and Koh Ker styles; founded by Harshavarman I between 900 and 922. *Laterite substructure; height 13 m: brick tower; height 11 m.*

VI. THE KHMER EMPIRE

After its revolutionary experiences under the three great founders of Angkor, Cambodia seems to hesitate a moment before continuing along the path of unification and expansion sketched out by such master hands. Dynastic quarrels led to the kings giving up the new capital. Nevertheless they took away with them both the cult of the kings and the art which expressed it; they conceived their new city according to the principles worked out at Angkor, that is to say intensive farming based on the urban irrigation system. And they built there the temples dedicated to the royal cult along the lines worked out by Jayavarman II and Yasovarman. Which goes to show that, by that time, Khmer society was entirely organised along the lines slowly worked out at Angkor. A further proof of the worth of this system is that it made it possible, on virgin soil in a hostile milieu, to build a whole great city from nothing, and to sustain it. This discovery of how to found populous cities relying on methodical exploitation of the soil, was to become an essential feature in Khmer expansion. By and large this momentary eclipse was a mere episode without serious consequences, and, no doubt, allowed the Khmer fully to take stock of their new powers and, finally, to appreciate the incomparable advantages of Angkor, which they very soon occupied again.

THE KOH KER INTERLUDE

Harshavarman I, the brother of Yasovarman, succeeded the latter in 900 and reigned till 921. His power must have been weak, or already disputed, for his monuments, though admirable, are on a very humble scale compared to the vast Bakheng. We know that in 921 his uncle by marriage, Jayavarman IV, revolted and established a new capital at Chok Gargyar, the modern Koh Ker, somewhat over 40 miles to the north east of Angkor. No doubt there were many complex reasons for the move, but one of them may have been a desire to return to the cradle of the Khmer race, Chen-la, as if the monarchs hesitated on the threshold of that immense empire to which Angkor opened the way, but which lay so far from their familiar surroundings.

MAP I IN APPENDIX

Jayavarman IV could only settle on the unfriendly and rather infertile plain of Koh Ker by building a city of Angkor type. He constructed an artificial lake, the Rahal, by making use of a small stream flowing through a natural depression. In that way he could irrigate the sloping land below. One detail is significant; to make better use of the land, the Rahal runs north-west-south-east, the temples of the city were built to the north west on high ground which could not be irrigated. If the importance of the lake had been purely symbolical and religious, it should have stretched strictly east-west, and the temples should have been built on that axis

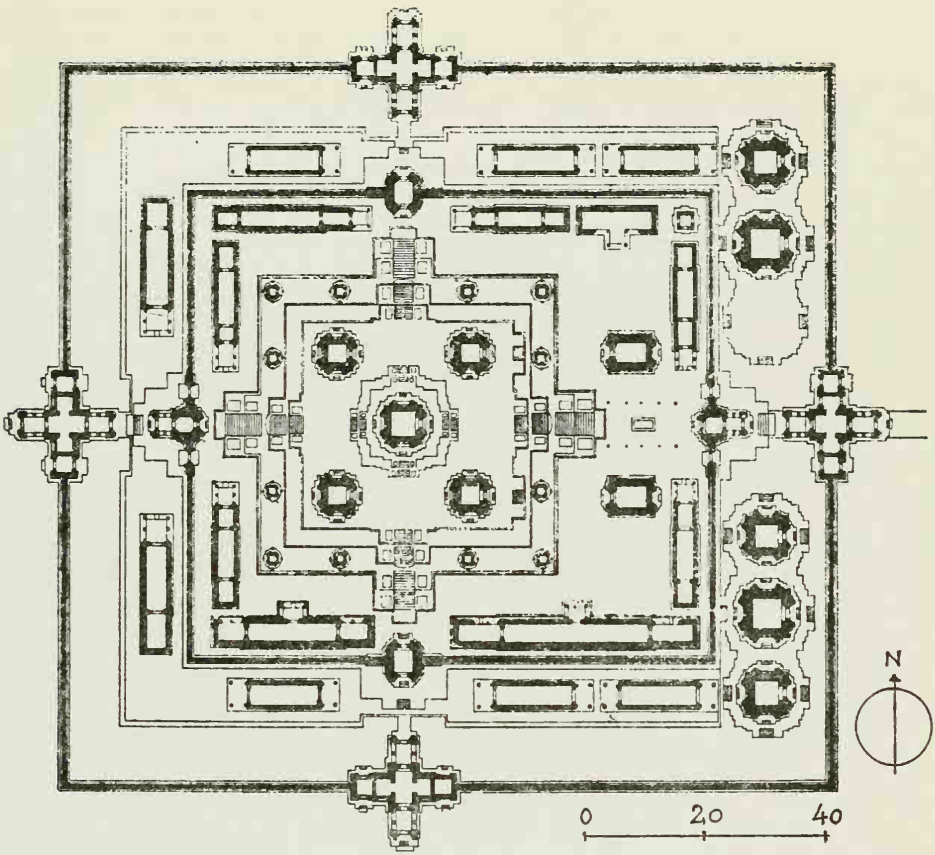


FIG. 18 — *Plan of Prè Rup; 961 A.D.*

to the west. That would have been technically possible, but only by giving up the chance to water and cultivate the best land. That proves that the Khmer chose the viable economic solution, and that their symbolism, which has sometimes thoughtlessly been stressed too much, gave way to much more material but, in the primary sense of the word, vital considerations. We shall find other examples. It was only much later, when they were masters of their technique and had a vast labour force available, that the Khmer kings literally set about reshaping nature, so that their schemes should correspond exactly with their cosmological

Prè Rup, Angkor. Eastern facade. Khmer Art; transitional between Koh Ker and Banteay Srei styles; founded by Rajendravarman in 961. *Laterite substructure 12 m. high. Towers in brick and stucco.*

conceptions. Even then they never lost their feeling for the concrete and useful. One cannot too strongly stress the suppleness of Khmer technique, which could use the nature of the land so effectively, and so harmoniously combine theoretical conceptions and economic needs. Khmer art too shows this mixture of realism and symbolism.

Like his predecessors, Jayavarman IV, was a fervent worshipper of Siva, and he erected a sacred *linga* in his new capital, thereby repeating the basic ceremony performed by Jayavarman II when founding Angkor, no doubt with the same intention of consecrating his seizure of power. He died in 941, his son continued to reign at Koh Ker till 944. The latter seems to have been especially devoted to the worship of Brahma, who plays an important part in Khmer art at that time.

THE RETURN TO ANGKOR

Whatever may have been the reasons for selecting Koh Ker, it could not, in the long run, supplant Angkor, whose wealth was ever growing thanks to the way it was planned and to its exceptional position. Therefore Rajendravarman (944 to 968) nephew both of the usurper and of Yasovarman, returned there when he ascended the throne. This return is all the more significant in that the new King, on his mother's side, was heir to the rulers of the very heart of Chen-la. This choice marked the definite break away from the cradle of Cambodia, and consecrated the settlement of the Khmer in the plain, where they became cultivators of low-lying flooded ground, and masters of all southern Indochina, with Angkor as the nerve-centre.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

Perhaps in expiation of that eclipse, and certainly in accordance with a tradition dating back to Indravarman, in 952 as soon as the king had returned to Angkor, he consecrated the temple of the eastern Mebon, dedicated especially to his royal ancestors, on an island in the middle of that eastern Baray created by his uncle Yasovarman. Later, in 961, he built a magnificent temple-mountain, Pre Rup, in the middle of his own capital to the south of the Baray. He was responsible for many other foundations, including the first core of the great shrine of Preah Vihear, dedicated to Siva of the Mountain, on the edge of the Dangrek mountains, high above the Cambodian plain, in one of the most beautiful natural sites in the whole of Asia. This king was certainly a man of refinement and surrounded himself with distinguished advisers, the Brahmin Yajnavaraha among others. But Rajendravarman was tolerant, and also had two Buddhist ministers in his service. The Mahayana Buddhist foundation of Bat Chum at Angkor and others date from his time. It would seem that in his reign posthumous deification became the monarch's chief concern, and that therefore the temple-mountain, which was for that purpose destined to be his funeral temple, took on even more importance. It is also important to note that throughout this period of Khmer history, and right down to the middle of the 12th century, the great lords, princes of the blood royal, chief priests and ministers, played

essential parts, sometimes even eclipsing the king. The reason for this may have been that several kings were very young when they ascended the throne, and needed guardians. In any case the influence of this aristocracy, which was often hereditary, is manifest, and it may have been at the root of the many dynastic quarrels which were to break out later. The multiplicity of private foundations is a symptom of this power, for the king was no longer the only dedicator. The temple-mountain remained his exclusive privilege, for he was the only representative of the gods on earth, but other shrines, more modest in size, but not less beautiful nor less important for their aesthetic and iconographic innovations, were erected by the richest and most powerful of his vassals. This abundance bears witness to the wealth of the land, which became literally covered with grateful dedications to the gods who favoured it.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

Politically Rajendravarman extended his power so far as to include Champa, and his armies actually sacked the Po Nagar of Nha-trang in 945-6. His son, Jayavarman V, succeeded him and reigned till 1001. He carried on his policies and, in particular, made Khmer sovereignty over Champa firm. It would seem that his capital was centred round Phimeanakas, which at that time became the palace temple of the kings of Angkor, a position it retained almost without a break until the fall of the great city.

KOH KER ART

Khmer art, in the shape it had assumed at Angkor in the course of the 9th century, continued to develop as if obeying some physical law of progressive acceleration. The Koh Ker interlude denoted no break in this progress. No doubt in order to confirm his seizure of power, the usurper Jayavarman IV erected truly grandiose projects there, continuing the series of gigantic royal foundations which are so characteristic of Khmer art, and which Rajendravarman, presumably unwilling to be left behind, started again at Angkor.

Architecture

It was at Angkor itself in the reign of Harshavarman I that the temple-mountain scheme became definitely fixed. Whereas the shrine at the top of the Bakong was, it seems clear, only built of perishable materials, and whereas the Bakheng used as its base the natural rock of the hill on which it was built, Harshavarman's mountain-temple, Baksei Chamkrong, was the first to be built entirely of durable materials on perfectly flat ground. Admittedly, compared to those two huge constructions, its

PLATE P. 105

scale is modest; a simple pyramid, 30 yards square at the base, and rising to a height of 43 yards in three stages: but it was built entirely of blocks of laterite. It is crowned by a single brick tower, 36 feet high. The harmony of its proportions, the purity of its composition which is based on an equilateral triangle, and the boldness of its outline, make this temple the most vigorous expression of that sacred mountain, for whose plastic equivalent men had been looking ever since Ak Yum. There is also a praiseworthy economy of means, rare in Khmer art. This perfectly

Prasat Kravanh, Angkor. Inner western wall of the northern tower. Lakshmi surrounded by worshippers. Transitional between Bakheng and Koh Ker styles; Vishnuite temple dedicated in 921. *Brick; height of the Lakshmi 1,66 m.*

complete little masterpiece must have been designed by a single artist of great talent.

Within less than twenty years Jayavarman IV erected an astonishing number of buildings at Koh Ker. Because sandstone was scarce there, brick was mostly used. Nonetheless the towers are as gigantic as ever, bringing to mind those of Sambor Prei Kuk. The sacred *linga* consecrated by the new king, was placed on top of a very impressive seven-stepped pyramid, 119 feet high, praised in contemporary inscriptions as a prodigy of skill. The final sanctuary is now destroyed, and we can only see the sandstone stylobate with superb lions holding it up. In spite of these mutilations it is still one of the boldest achievements of Khmer architecture.

FIG. 18 To return to Angkor, Rajendravarman used the experience gained in all these earlier buildings to build an even larger and more complex temple-mountain. The eastern Mebon (952) and, more particularly, Pre Rup (961) mark the two stages of his search. The latter is a wonderful success.

PLATE P. 108 The three-stepped pyramid scheme has been used again with the same bold proportions as Baksei Chamkrong, but carried much further. The summit is crowned by five brick towers, a main one in the centre and four others at the angles. The shrine is approached, as before, by axial stairs, and the main flights are guarded by lions. On the two first terraces there are little subsidiary sanctuaries and, a new feature, long stone chambers, formerly with tile-covered wooden roofs. Later on, these chambers will originate long galleries. In spite of these various annexes, the whole has a wonderful purity of line, and Pre Rup with its harmonies of blood red and light pink is one of the most beautiful ensembles at Angkor.

The carved ornament After the almost baroque exuberance of Preah Ko and the sophistication of Bakheng, architectural ornament sobers down a little during the Koh Ker style. It is on the lintels that the most beautiful compositions are still found. At Koh Ker itself, in the midst of the foliage, there are some very beautiful figure scenes, generally representing a god on some fantastic animal. The little octagonal columns are decorated with more and more heavily loaded rings, and each flat surface is ornamented with a leaf framed between two half leaves of the same size. Hence the empty spaces between the rings are reduced, and the whole loses much of its line. The pediments are often triangular with splendid volutes turning up at the ends. This design, which appeared at Bakong, imitates the wood and tile roofs of the long chambers, and is a typical example of a technique evolved for wood being used for stone. Quite naturally it becomes more common as those subsidiary buildings became more frequent, which, as we have seen, was particularly the case at Pre Rup. On the tympana one most often sees some divinity framed in fine scrolls of decorative foliage.

Sculpture The most interesting innovations of the Koh Ker style are in its free-standing sculpture. That is not true of the statues of divinities intended

for the shrines, which stick to the Bakheng pattern, though they are perhaps a little less cold: they too have hair coming to a point over the temples, a moustache and fringe beard, and sharp straight eyebrows; the very stylised male clothes still have the double anchor-shaped fold, and the pocket on the left hip, but there is also a hem caught up over the belt: jewels are added without stint. But besides these hieractic and fundamentally conventional works, the approaches to the temple of Koh Ker are ornamented with gigantic groups. There is a pair of wrestlers, monkeys fighting, and colossal *garudas* chasing a *naga,* a motif first found at Bakong. Here the movement is expressed by the stone with a power and dynamism which are astonishing when one considers the scale of the work. Following up experiments first made in the time of Indravarman, we here find Khmer sculpture breaking completely away from frontality and expressing movement in free space, something never done before or since in Asia. Works of this sort are hardly found again later. But we know now that this was not from incapacity, but because aesthetic feeling had evolved in other directions. We must now turn to another aspect of this style, which was again the last of its kind; relief on brick. Exceptionally fine panels in this technique have been preserved at Prasat Kravan, a temple dedicated to Vishnu in 921 by some high dignitaries of Angkor. The different aspects of the god are seen on the internal walls of the central tower, whereas the inside of the northern tower is decorated with the gentle figure of his wife, Lakshmi. In all probability it was once covered with a coating of bright colours, but that has now entirely perished. However the carving, which is surprisingly delicate considering what an intractable material brick is, loses nothing thereby; perhaps it even gains in intensity and sobriety. The chaste lines of the figures, with only a few discreet details of jewellery to set them off, stand out from a uniform background. In the dim sanctuary the light glides over the cunningly modulated volumes of the figures, and makes them tremble with tingling life. It is moreover to the point to mention that a little brick sanctuary in southern Cambodia, Prasat Neang Khmau, has been dated to this time (928), and preserves in the interior traces of frescoes. They are too damaged for us to be able to judge them properly, but they do at least bear witness to a technique which Khmer artists must have mastered when decorating their wooden buildings. Knowing neither the standards nor the achievements of this painting, we lack something which would have helped us to judge correctly the decorative sculpture and stone reliefs which must have learnt much from painting.

PLATE P. 111

THE BANTEAY SREI STYLE

Immediately after the death of Rajendravarman, during the first years of the reign of his successor Jayavarman V, there is a short-lived phase of Khmer art, almost entirely confined to a single monument, which nevertheless deserves to be classed under a separate heading as the style of Banteay Srei. For the only time in Khmer history, this style is associated,

Banteay Srei, Angkor. Southern facade of the southern tower-sanctuary; western panel. Banteay Srei style: third quarter of the 10th century; founded by Vajnavaraha in 967. *Pink sandstone; height of the figure 0,56 m.*

not with a king, but with another individual, that outstanding personality the Brahmin Yajnavaraha. He sprang from the blood royal, being a grandson of Harshavarman I, and had been the tutor first of Rajendravarman and then of Jayavarman V. A fervent worshipper of Siva, his wide culture was combined with restless curiosity. And we owe to him one of the most delightful phases of Khmer sculpture.

In 967 Yajnavaraha dedicated to Siva a shrine, now known as the Banteay Srei, on land 12 miles north of Angkor given to him by the kings, his cousins and masters. That, and two tiny temples in the heart of Angkor Thom, are practically the only buildings in this style. But the extraordinary perfection of Banteay Srei, and the sense of creative search in its sculpture, are reason enough to give its name to a new style. The personality of the founder shines through in every detail, in the intelligence of the plan, the refinements of ritual ceremony, the iconographic motifs and the borrowings from earlier styles. This last characteristic is particularly significant, as it shows that the Khmer themselves reflected about their art, taking up again this or that emphasis which they found especially felicitous. However, just as imitations of antique themes in the Italian Renaissance, these are immediately betrayed by some anachronism or misunderstood detail. They prove that already at this time Khmer art had become so profoundly sophisticated that it began to show that feature characteristic of old age, intentional archaism.

Architecture

In the centre of successive concentric enclosures, Banteay Srei consists of three tower-sanctuaries in a line on a single terrace, with a domed brick projection in front of the eastern door of the principal shrine. Libraries and long chambers frame it and, with the usual entrance pavilions particularly happily placed in the successive surrounding walls, complete the plan. The main sanctuary is on a minute scale, only 33 feet high. One must touch the lintel with one's scarcely raised hand, to take in how small this tower is, for it looks imposing in the distance. The perspective and the interrelation of the parts are so well arranged, that the eye is deceived in spite of itself. That again brings inevitably to mind comparisons with some of the discoveries of the Italian Renaissance, for instance the stage scenery of the Palladian theatre at Vicenza. It is the learned and subtle play of a man of refinement, who knows how to juggle with all the resources of art.

Ornament

The ornament especially reveals the wealth of invention of Banteay Srei. Imitations of the past, such as round columns and lintels inspired by the Preah Ko style, come to renew a repertoire which tended to get a little desiccated while the Koh Ker style prevailed. One is seduced particularly by the thousand little figures dancing in and out of the foliage on the lintels, and over the garlands. Exquisite feminine figures holding a flower in their open hand, are carved like gems in the rose sandstone of the walls. They are surrounded by flying genii and dancers intwined

Fig. 19

Plate p. 114

Banteay Srei, Angkor. Group of Siva and Uma. Banteay Srei style: third quarter of the 10th century. *Pink sandstone; height 0,60 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

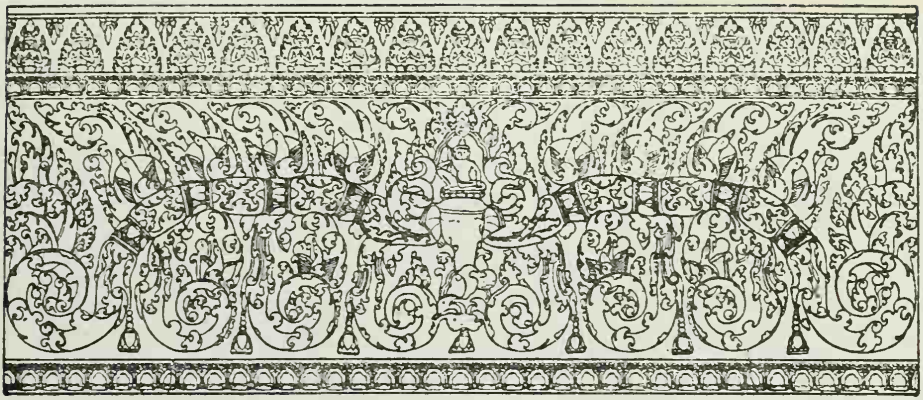


Fig. 19 — *Lintel; Khmer art transitional between Prè Rup and Banteay Srei styles; third quarter of the Xth century.*

in the harmonious swirls of foliage on the pilasters. There are novelties on every side; the entrance hall before the main shrine is delightfully decorated with square panels of garlands, and the landings of the stairs are guarded by figures with fantastic heads. Everywhere the most assured taste reigns, served by the immaculate skill which one may hope to find in a goldsmith, but hardly in a stone-mason.

Sculpture

The most lovely of all the novelties at Banteay Srei are the scenes carved on the tympana. No doubt the reduced scale of the temple made it impossible to carve narrative reliefs on the walls. Therefore the pediments were used for this. On an unencumbered background boasting no more than one or two stylised trees, a feature borrowed from Java by way of Preah Ko, a few figures enact some episode from sacred legend. One really might have said "play", for one seems to be looking at a scene in a theatre. Moreover it is not impossible that the artists were inspired by the mimed dramas which, at that time, must have revived for the Khmer memories of the great religious epics, dramas which were also the origin of the modern dance and shadow theatre.

But the free-standing sculpture of Banteay Srei is also not without its charm. On a very small scale, to suit the miniature temple, it carries on the Koh Ker style while also borrowing from earlier fashions. For instance the female divinities decorating the walls wear smooth skirts taken from pre-Angkor sculpture, and their jewels and headdresses are equally archaistic. Moreover there is a certain return to anatomical accuracy. It is especially the faces with their fleshy, almost sensual, lips and wide open eyes, which are so captivating, and constitute a large part of that charm of Banteay Srei which every visitor to Angkor feels.

Plate p. 116

But all the wealth of decorative motifs and other fertile experiments at Banteay Srei, should not make us forget for its sake the profound, albeit more austere, genius of Khmer art manifest in the highest degree in the temple-mountains. After this interlude of repose, we must turn again to find this grandeur more impressive than ever.

THE SOLAR DYNASTY

In the early years of the 11th century a new dynasty came to power at Angkor. Despite the fairy tales of genealogists, it would seem that Suryavarman I, offspring of the "solar race" of Cambodia, was nothing but a pure usurper who conquered Angkor by force of arms. When he had defeated the ephemeral successors of Jayavarman V, he established himself in the capital about the year 1011. There are good reasons to think that he originally came from the central part of the Malayan peninsula. But at that time this district was completely dominated by, and assimilated to Khmer civilisation, and the new king's advent by no means signified the seizure of power by a stranger, or any essential change, such as a new wave of Indonesian influence. Suryavarman I was as much a Khmer as any of his predecessors, and one looks in vain for any trace of foreign influence in his art. Perhaps the only significant change was the introduction of Buddhism, or rather a door left wider open for it. The King himself was a follower of Siva, and carried on the royal cult of his predecessors. But he came from a region where Buddhism flourished with particular intensity round the kingdom of Dvaravati, and the reappearance of Buddhist statues and themes is characteristic of Khmer art at this time. It was perhaps the first step in an advance which finally lead to triumph throughout Cambodia.

Suryavarman I reigned until 1050. Due, no doubt, as much to his origin as to the fact that he clearly was a man of great energy, he effectively annexed to the Khmer Empire the whole southern part of Siam from Lopburi to Ligor, and probably the greater part of southern Laos, perhaps reaching out as far as Luang Prabang. At Angkor he restored or completed his predecessors' monuments, in particular the temple-mountains of Phimeanakas and Ta Kèo, while outside the capital he added new buildings to Preah Vihear, and founded the beautiful shrines at Vak Ek, Vat Baset, Phnom Chisor and Chau Srei Vibol among others.

His son, Udayadityavarman II, succeeded him and reigned till 1066. In spite of his very short reign continually troubled by revolts in all the provinces of his vast empire, this King extended still further his dominion, and probably reached the greatest height of power ever attained by any Khmer king. Testimony of this is found at Angkor itself in the gigantic temple-mountain, the Baphuon, and the capital which he built round it. This site was later covered by Angkor Thom, which we see today, and it is difficult to sort out exactly what belongs to which period. Besides this, perhaps because the eastern Baray tended to dry up, or simply to double

Phimeanakas, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Eastern facade. Khleang style; last quarter of the 10th century; founded by Jayavarman V between 968 and 1001. *Height of the laterite substructure 12 m. The sandstone gallery may have been added after the year 1000.*

the food supply for the constantly increasing population, the King constructed a vast new artificial lake to the west of his town, which is known as the western Baray, and is 5 miles long and more than a mile across. It was fed, in the then approved fashion, by a stream flowing in at the north east corner, and it watered all the paddy fields running down to the lake, thereby doubling the cultivable area round Angkor. This work covered up the ancient 9th century city which had been built in that place, and, the temple of Ak Yum in particular disappeared under the earth of the southern dike of the Baray. In the middle of the Baray, on an island artificially created, the King constructed the western Mebon.

Although certainly much inclined to the worship of Vishnu, and especially to the beautiful story of Krishna which is illustrated on all his temples, the King was, as befitted his position, strict in his observance of the worship of Siva. It may even be that his reign marked a certain anti-Buddhist reaction, without, however, eliminating this faith which was never to stop spreading in Cambodia from the beginning of the 11th century. The younger brother of Udayadityavarman II succeeded him in 1066, and reigned under the name of Harshavarman II down to 1080. He had to face the attacks of the Cham who had regained their freedom and even succeeded in burning the ancient city of Sambor on the Mekong, after they had pillaged it most profitably. Clearly in his reign the power of the Solar dynasty was rapidly eroded. After less than a century of dominion, his race had to give way to a new and even more ambitious line who, as builders of Angkor Vat, were to endow Cambodia with the prestige of its most famous monument.

THE KHLEANG STYLE

After the Banteay Srei style Khmer art at Angkor went on almost unaffected by political struggles, and the successive phases of its development never exactly correspond with changes of dynasty. A fact which, one may note, proves the power and vitality of Khmer civilisation, from henceforth so solidly established that a change of persons on the throne could not hold back its *élan*. Hence the style called Khleang extends from the second part of Jayavarman V's reign, or about 978, until the beginning of the reign of Suryavarman I, about 1010. After that comes the Baphuon style, which takes shape in the second half of Suryavarman I's reign, reaches its full glory between 1050 and 1066 under Udayadityavarman II, and declines under his successor. There is a sharp distinction between these two phases, but this does not deny the fact that the evolution was continuous, homogeneous and, in a sense, logical.

Architecture

We are inclined to think that it was Jayavarman V who (perhaps about 978) founded the temple-mountain of Phimeanakas which marked the centre of his capital. The progress since Pre Rup is clear. The laterite pyramid is in three stages with a remarkably bold outline, for while it

PLATE P. 119

Ta Kèo, Angkor. Eastern facade. Khleang style: last quarter of the 10th century; founded by Jayavarman V (968–1001) and Suryavarman I (1002–1050). *Sandstone and laterite; height of the substructure 38 m, length of the eastern facade over 100 m.*

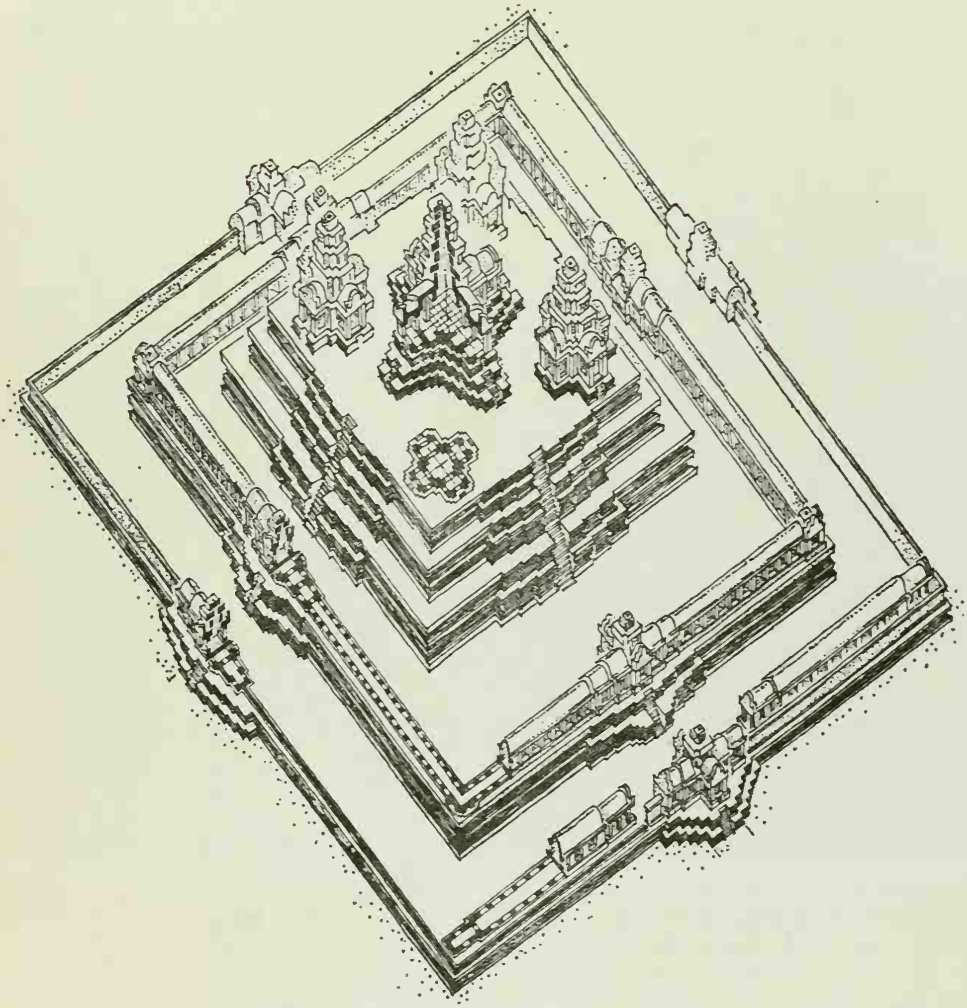


FIG. 20 — *Ta Kéo, Angkor. Axonometric view.*

measures 38 by 31 yards at the base, it is still 33 by 25 yards at the summit 40 feet higher. The central shrine, which was certainly unique, has vanished. But round the third terrace there is a continuous covered gallery entirely built of sandstone. This gallery may be a slightly later addition, for its style would seem to date from about the same period as Ta Kèo which is probably a few years later than Phimeanakas itself, but earlier than the five sandstone gate-houses of the encircling wall there. The colossal temple-mountain of Ta Kèo may have been begun under Jayavarman V or, more probably, one of his short lived successors, and then continued, but not completed, under Suryavarman I. It is most astonishing that, at a time of political disturbance and during such brief reigns, these vast and magnificent stone buildings should have been erected. This is further proof, if any is needed of the extraordinary opulence of the Khmer. Ta Kèo marks the end of the long line of development of the temple-mountain which began with Ak Yum. By constant experiments, sometimes advancing, sometimes hesitating, at one moment improving the pyramid, at another the subsidiary buildings, the Khmer architects finally succeeded in codifying the scheme they were seeking. The five-step pyramid, in spite of its colossal scale, is almost entirely covered in sandstone. It is 113 by 134 yards at the base, 52 yards square at the top, and the platform at the summit is 129 feet above the ground level. On this platform there are five monumental towers disposed, as at Pre Rup, in a quincunx, but this time built entirely of sandstone. There is also a gallery going right round the second terrace, derived from the long chambers at Pre Rup and the similar gallery at Phimeanakas. There are towers at the corners, and the middle of each side is broken by a pavilion dominating the stairway. The whole masterly composition, one of the most perfect at Angkor, flies up towards the sky, while the sheer mass of stone gives it strength.

PLATE P. 121

FIG. 20

We have still to mention the two lovely Khleang monuments which gave their name to the style. They are in the middle of Angkor Thom opposite the royal palace, but their lay-out and purpose remain a puzzle. Especially in the northern building, which is the older, admirably sober decoration brings out the excellence of bold proportions. Chau Srei Vibol and the subsidiary buildings added at Preah Vihear by Suryavarman I, make the transition leading to the Baphuon style.

Ornament

By and large the ornament of this period is not so lovely as the architecture, its essential merit being discretion. The somewhat monotonous lintels are decorated with a leafy branch bending under the weight of a monster's head in the middle, and punctuated in four places by a floral motif characteristic of this style. The little columns, once more invariably octagonal, are loaded with even more rings covered with more and more even smaller leaves, which in later periods turn into a regular tooth pattern. The pediments still often preserve the fine triangular design

Vat Ek, Battambang. Cambodia. Eastern pediment inside the tower-sanctuary: churning of the Ocean by the gods and demons. Baphuon style: middle of the 11th century. Founded by Suryavarman I (1002—1050). *Sandstone; height of the pediment 1,80 m.*

derived from wood, but the tympana have no more than a simple floral decoration.

Sculpture

We know of no relief of this period, and it does not seem that any were carved at Phimeanakas or Ta Kèo, and we have only a very few statues, so that it is difficult to trace the development of style. But one can see that older traditions were maintained, and some innovations worked out during the Banteay Srei period were felicitously adopted. Compared to Koh Ker, the modelling is gentler, and, as at Banteay Srei, the faces are smiling. The male clothes have a very simplified version of the pocket on the hip, but not the anchor-shaped fold. The skirts of the female figure have a turned up hem, and tend to be cut low over the navel, rising higher on the back, a fashion which became the rule in the Baphuon style. So it is really only the Khleang architecture which is remarkable. But in judging other products of that time, one should not forget how short and troubled an age it was, for the style hardly had the chance to blossom.

THE BAPHUON STYLE

The last phase of the Khleang style, in the second half of the reign of Suryavarman I, paved the way for the style of Baphuon, but its real glory was undoubtedly due to the exceptional personality of Udayadityavarman II, and scarcely lasted after his death.

Architecture

Profiting from lessons learnt at Phimeanakas and, even more, at Ta Kèo, Udayadityavarman II was in a position to build a temple-mountain worthy of a man of such immense power. His Baphuon is as vast as Angkor Vat, and remains one of the most magnificent monuments in the whole world. Unfortunately time has dealt roughly with all of it, and the western facade has been gravely disfigured by the clumsiness of later work. It is difficult to discover the original plan, particularly that of the final tower-sanctuary, which was apparently coated with plates of gilt copper and must have looked splendid. The whole enclosure was some 480 by 140 yards; to the east there was one gate-house and then another, and a paved road more than 200 yards long raised on little columns; the pyramid itself measured some 130 by 110 yards at the base. It went up in five steps to a height of more than 75 feet, and the complete building must have been about 160 feet high. The first and second terraces are entirely surrounded by vaulted sandstone galleries. Substantial towers accented the four angles, while the centre of each facade was stressed by an entrance-pavilion, high in the centre with wings tapering down, punctuating the rise of the stairs. Four sandstone libraries on the first terrace completed the lay-out. Faced by the ruined mass of stone which is all that is left now of the Baphuon, it is hard to realise its former magnificence. One detects some mistakes; the first terrace seems too wide, and the galleries too mean for such a vast building. However, despite the bludgeonings of time, the temple is still impressive, and indeed one of the finest flowers of Khmer genius.

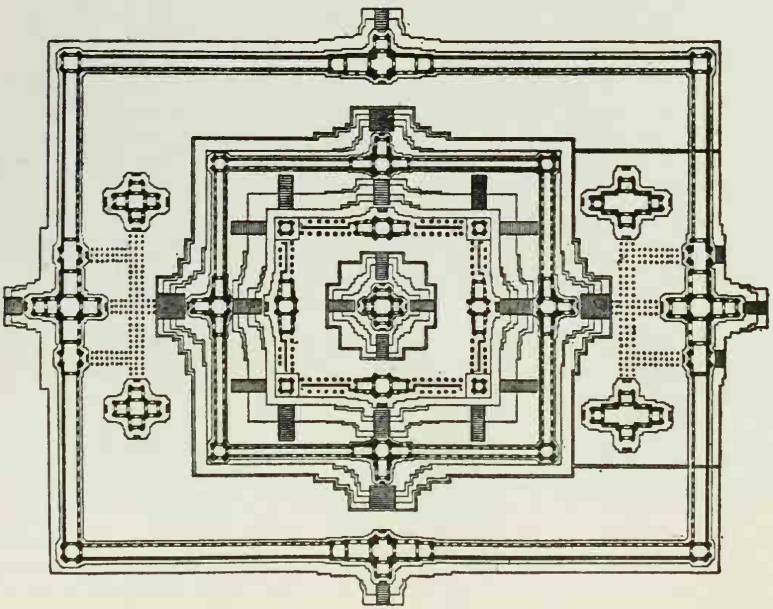
Fig. 21

The smaller foundations scattered over the land also deserve some attention, for it was at that time that the type became fixed for a little temple

Baphuon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Western panel of the south facade of the axial pavilion on the second terrace: legend of the child Krishna. Baphuon style: middle of the 11th century. Temple-mountain founded by Udayadityavarman II (1050–1066). *Sandstone; height of the panel 0,32 m.*

dedicated by king or subject to a local divinity. The symbolism appropriate to a royal temple-mountain in the capital was not required in that context, and the shrines are usually just on one level, the tower housing the idol being the essential feature. From this time onwards it is built of sandstone. Often a smaller forepart enhances the impression of size of the main building, and the whole is dignified by massive foundations. Usually there is a pair of libraries on either side of the east door. There is a gallery round, like a cloister, with one or more gate-pavilions; beyond that comes the encircling wall with the usual moats and tanks. The proportions and ornament of these simple shrines are sometimes very beautiful and, on their smaller scale, as exquisite as the great monuments in the capital, for Khmer artists kept to the same high standards in everything they did. Therefore the lovely temples of Vat Ek and Vat Baset, founded in the reign of Suryavarman I, merit as much attention as the Baphuon. One must however admit that, despite such prodigies, Khmer architecture

FIG. 21 — *Plan of the Baphuon, Angkor; 1050–1066 A.D.*



is sometimes disconcertingly clumsy. They had come to use nothing but stone; laterite for all the rough work, and sandstone for the finish, at least whenever carved ornament was required, and they could even make vaulting of that material. Though however, their buildings became even vaster and vaster, they still went on using stone as if it was wood, with disastrous consequences for the solidity of their erections. Thus throughout the Baphuon period sandstone walls were strengthened by concealed beams let into the middle of them. Naturally the wood has rotted away, and the blocks of stone, futilely hollowed out to hold the wood, have fallen. They never discovered any improvement on corbelled vaulting which, using heavy slabs of sandstone, allowed them to roof only very modest spans. Consequently, except for the interiors of the towers, only long chambers and galleries were roofed over. Finally, look where we will, we can only find three constituent elements in Khmer architecture even when fully developed; the terrace, either used as the platform on which to build, or for the steps of a pyramid; the tower, housing a tiny *cella,* sometimes with a forepart, and sometimes with an entrance-pavilion and flanking wings; the vaulted gallery, which may serve for an annexed building, a gallery running round one storey, or the connection between two towers. It is almost like a child's toy bricks with three basic shapes. Obviously very few permutations and combinations are possible, and the lay-out must always be centralised, symmetrical and rectilinear. There is nothing left for the architect but to play about with proportions and perspective. Luckily the Khmer were almost unrivalled at that game.

Ornament

While there is still a certain clumsiness in the architecture of the Baphuon, its decoration may well count as the very best in all Khmer art, for it keeps to its proper function, that of emphasising the proportions and mass of the building, and not, as was to happen too often later, eating it up. Though the surfaces covered were immense, both the general arrangement and the perfection of detail arouse our astonished admiration. The kings of Angkor must have had at their command a large and highly skilled labour force.

Those lintels which are decorated with foliage are not very different from those of Khleang style. But scenes with figures again appear on some lintels, as had been the fashion in the 8th century. Sometimes lintel and tympanum are combined in one composition illustrating a religious theme, most often one concerned with Vishnu, and executed with the same grace and verve that we shall find again in reliefs elsewhere on the walls. The little columns have become nothing but piles of overloaded rings, and from this time onwards we need not waste time on them; they started as an element in wooden buildings, which from conservatism was still used in stone ones, but, having lost all functional purpose, became more and more debased, till in the end they were completely unre-

PLATE P. 124

Head of a god. Unknown origin. Baphuon style: middle of the 11th century. *Sandstone; height 0,22 m. Chartres Museum.*

cognisable and nonsensical. On the other hand the branches, the sober and vigorous frames of the pediments, the carved decoration on the supporting walls, the rises, steps and landings of the stairs, and the lovely stone lotus flowers crowning the towers, are all elements of the Baphuon which repay prolonged contemplation. In it refinement, purity of form and a sense of architectural volume are combined in a harmony almost unique in Khmer art.

Sculpture

The sculpture is, at least as much as the architecture, a triumph of the Baphuon style. To start with, sandstone reliefs, out of fashion since Bakong times, appear again. On the corner towers and, especially, on the entrance-pavilions there are little superimposed panels illustrating the Vishnu legend, particularly the story of Krishna. One certainly does not find here the superb mastery that is found on the frieze running round the whole of the fifth storey at Bakong, so that in a sense the Baphuon has fallen back from that standard. Technique and composition are both simple. The characters mime their adventures against a bare background,

PLATE P. 126

with only some schematised detail of tree, bird or house to place the scene. Once again one's thoughts turn to the theatre and the use of stage properties. It seems likely that inexperienced sculptors taking up relief carving in stone once more, felt embarrassed by the task, all the more so since the modelling is much stronger than that of the Bakong, or even Banteay Srei. Especially the clumsy handling of the clothes betray the tiro. But though the sculptor is feeling his way, there is enchanting taste and gaiety in his work. However one must not therefore assume that this art was naive. There is so much skill and subtlety in the architecture and in the sculpture of the Baphuon, that we must assume that the artist treated these subjects in this way intentionally, perhaps with a frank smile which, maybe, the Khmer thought went well with the stories illustrated. At any rate there is no clumsiness or hesitation in the free-standing sculpture which is both the most accomplished and the most attractive of all that at Angkor. With subtle harmony these statues combine purity of line and the smiling grace of the features at Banteay Srei. The male divinities wear very sober clothes, finely pleated, with a discreet and highly stylised pocket-shaped fold on the hip, fixed by a slip-knot. The upper edge, folded over below the navel, rises high at the back. The feminine dress is of much the same design, with the fold in front in a fish-tail, and fine belts with a flat knot. The bodies are slim and graceful, rising from their sheath of clothes like the stem of a flower. The rounded face

PLATE P. 129

with delicate nose and full lips usually emphasised by a dimple on the chin, seem to laugh straight in one's face.

By good luck a fragment of the colossal bronze Vishnu from the western Mebon has been found. The plan of that little temple is rather unusual. Basically it is a square enclosure with sides about 110 yards long, and on each side there are three little open pavilions evenly spaced. A basin of

Vishnu plunged in cosmic sleep, floating on the primordial ocean. Western Mebon, Angkor. Baphuon style: middle of the 11th century. *Bronze; height 1.44 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

water surrounded with steps filled almost the whole of the interior, and in the middle of this tiny lake was a square island approached by a causeway from the central entrance-pavilion on the east side. The building on the island has not survived. But we gather from written sources that there was a colossal statue of Vishnu "continually spouting water from the navel". It must have been a statue of Vishnu asleep and resting on the primordial waters between two creations of the worlds. The head and part of the bust of this work was actually discovered at the bottom of an interestingly constructed octagonal well. The whole statue must have been more than 13 feet long. It was made in sections by the *cire perdue* process. The sections were welded together and, originally they were incrusted with precious metals and perhaps jewels and enamel were used for the eyes. The technique alone of this extraordinary work excites our admiration, and proves the profound skill of Khmer bronze-founders. An equally beautiful object is the admirable Siva's head from Por Loboeuk

PLATE P. 131

PLATE P. 134

which has recently been discovered. It proves that in the Baphuon era the art of working in bronze attained a perfection and a monumental grandeur only surpassed by ancient Greece. It is important to stress this point, for we know from inscriptions that the chief idols at Angkor were made of metal, usually some precious metal, and that stone was only good enough for secondary works. We are therefore forced, as in the case of classical Greek sculpture, to judge Khmer statuary by the least important examples. The Vishnu from the Mebon and the Siva from Por Loboeuk make us fully aware of the differences which existed between these two techniques. Free from the limitations imposed on the stone-carver and with no need for a frontal pose, this great bronze sails through space with incomparable authority. With the Vishnu, one arm supports the sleeping head, while the other arms enliven the space behind, and the languid flow of the bronze bust sets the rhythm of the major theme. Though the precious metals, enamel and jewels are lost, the calm, majestic features are still full of intense life. The Siva from Por Loboeuk is no less compelling and may claim to be one of the most magnificent bronze in the whole of Asia. It leaves us inconsolable to think of what must have been melted down by the plunderers of Angkor.

The Baphuon style stands out as one of the greatest moments of Khmer art. Had it not been followed by the perfection of Angkor Vat and the somewhat mysterious charm of the Bayon, one would have given it first place. It certainly deserves credit for preparing the way for Angkor Vat by experiments in all fields, which were both supremely audacious and most perfectly executed. Two and a half centuries had passed since the founding of Angkor, and the Baphuon style is the amazing culmination of a ceaseless political, economic, intellectual and aesthetic progress without parallel in Indochina.

VII. INDOCHINA IN THE SHADOW OF ANGKOR

While the spectacular rise of Cambodia extended its power, or at least its influence, over the whole of Indianised Indochina, the other countries in the peninsula enjoyed a period of prosperity which was not so brilliant, but still interesting, if only to throw into relief the genius of the Khmer.

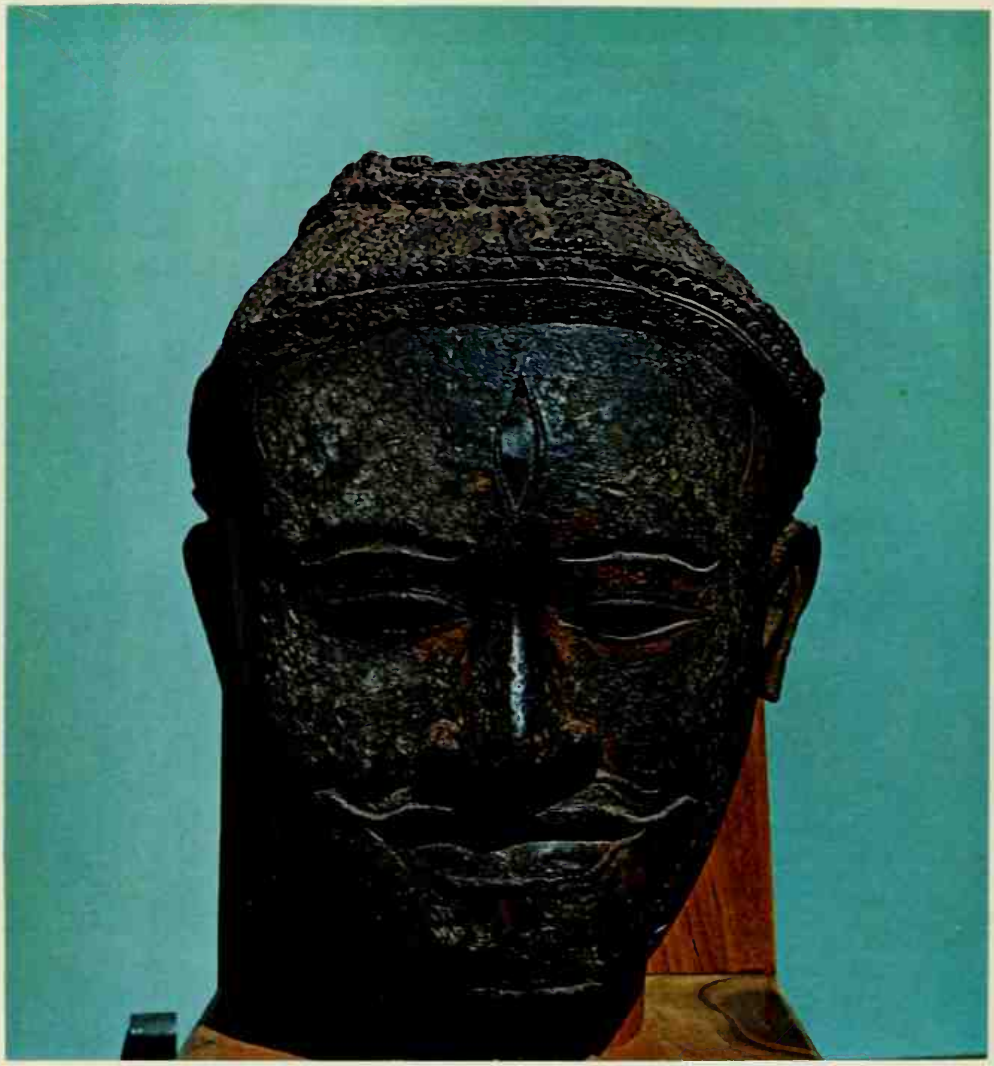
CHAMPA

Towards the end of the 9th century a new dynasty was reigning over Champa from the capital of Indrapura, the modern Quang-nam. This dynasty was founded by Indravarman II (875 to about 898), an ardent Buddhist to whom we owe the extensive building activity at Dong-duong. During the reigns of Indravarman and his successors, peaceful relations with Indonesia replaced the bloody contests of the previous century, thus explaining how the monuments of central Java influenced Cham art at that time.

King Indravarman III (about 918 to 960) had to withstand Khmer attacks, and perhaps for that reason he was strictly punctilious about sending embassies to China. The influence of Angkor predominated in his reign; this is found in the Mi-son A 1 style which then flourished. But Champa was soon faced with a much more serious threat. A now independent Annam took over the expansionist policies of its former Chinese masters, and cast envious eyes on the fertile plains and wealthy cities of the Cham. Before the end of the 10th century a fateful and relentless struggle had begun, a struggle on which depended the very survival of one or the other of those people. In 982 the Vietnamese sacked Indrapura, and one of them maintained himself there as king for some time. The Cham rallied round a new ruler, Harivarman II (988 to 998) who made his capital in the south at Vijaya (Binh-dinh). Thereafter the centre of the country remained in this region, although the northern provinces were reconquered and held for a certain time.

MAP I IN APPENDIX

This did not mean that pressure from Vietnam relaxed; there were almost annual invasions reaching as far as Vijaya, which was captured in 1044 and finally razed to the ground in 1069. Champa then had to give up its northern provinces, a necessity made more imperious because at the same time Khmer attacks had to be faced. Harivarman IV (1074 to 1080) was able for a while to put an end to this continual nibbling. We have mentioned his successful raid into Cambodia and the plundering of Sambor. The many foundations at Mi-son gave his country security and a certain glory. His successors Jaya Indravarman II (1081 to 1113). Harivarman V (1113 to 1139) and Jaya Indravarman III (1139 to 1145), reigned in comparative security and were able to revive some of the glories of Cham art before the dynasty and the whole country fell under the Khmer armies in 1145.



Head of Siva. Por Loboeuk, Kralanh, Siemrep, Cambodia. Baphuon style: middle of 11th century. *Gilt bronze with incrustations partly in glazed lead; height: 0.32 m. Depot for the preservation of Angkor, Siemreap.*

CHAM ART

The contrast between Cham and Khmer art is not a matter of opposed aesthetic theories, which would be a common enough phenomenon, but depends above all on the completely different rolls assigned to art in the two societies. The contrast is all the more remarkable, when one remembers that India provided their common model, that up to the foundation of Angkor the two schools had progressed along lines so closely parallel that the works of the one almost get confused with those of the other, and, moreover, there was constant mutual influence, as was mentioned a propos of the Prei Kmeng and Kulên styles.

While the Khmer were transformed in the melting pot of Angkor the Cham continued along the same lines. Both the physical fragmentation of their country and the Cham love for the sea resulted in their perpetual division into small principalities, sometimes united under a particularly energetic king, but without either the wish or the means to form a socially and economically integrated country. Consequently their power was always limited and Champa never ranked as one of the great civilising powers; indeed, it hardly surpassed the status of Chen-la in its decline during the 7th and 8th centuries. Art remained a royal privilege and, concordant with that power, was on a modest scale. The people had neither part nor lot in the matter. Such conditions did not exclude refinement, quality or originality. It only meant that Cham art, unlike that of Angkor, never expressed the sanctification of the country and the people who lived there.

Cham temples were mostly royal foundations and remained true to the original scheme of the tower-sanctuary housing the idol, often flanked by lesser towers and enclosed by a wall. Like the Khmer, but perhaps under Indonesian influence to an even greater extent, the Cham kings paid special attention to their own deification. They increased the number of temples containing statues in their own image and which held the attributes of the god to whom they wished to be assimilated. But they never evolved the scheme expressed by the temple-mountain of deification on earth. Hence Mi-son, which was for ever their holy place, is impressive because of the circle of wild mountains surrounding it and derives a certain grandeur from the many foundations scattered on the lower hills, but has nothing of the superb urban lay-out of Angkor. To conclude, the progress of Cham art is marked by the quality of the ornament and sculpture, by the harmony and rhythm of the buildings, but not by any fresh architectural discoveries or any entirely new aesthetic theory as was the case with the Khmer.

MAP III IN APPENDIX

In one respect, however, Champa did discover new forms to express beliefs particularly popular there. Of these the most important is the great monastery at Dong-duong, where we find a whole scheme of buildings to answer the needs of the community, a scheme which was unknown in Cambodia and is no longer to be found in India, though we know

from written sources that they existed. It is true enough that in that domain we ought perhaps to look elsewhere for the origins of Cham art. Champa learnt much from places other than India, Cambodia and Indonesia. There were constant relations with China, particularly with the Buddhists, for monks were continually going by sea to worship at the holy places in India, and on this journey they would land on the Cham coast. It is therefore reasonable to see the influence of Chinese Buddhist sculpture on that of Dong-duong. Probably one should look in the same direction for the origin of the great altars decorated with statues, which are the most interesting examples of Cham sculpture, and Cham *stupas* too probably derive from China. Since the Chinese examples are clearly earlier than the Cham works, we are led to suppose that there must have been some intermediary, which in all probability was Sino-Vietnamese art. We know practically nothing about the earlier phases of the latter, and can only make a guess at the general lines of its development. It originated partly from the Dong-son tradition and partly from the Chinese heritage, and was constantly in contact with Cham art. Certainly it played an important part, though we lack the evidence to show exactly how. Thus its very geographical position made Champa the pivot where all the formative influences of Indochina met, and its art, which merits more study than it has yet received, is fundamental in that context.

The Hoa-lai style

After the wonderful Mi-son E 1 period the evolution of Cham art at the beginning of the 9th century is followed with difficulty. Paradoxically enough our only evidence comes from Prasat Damrei Krap built on the Kulên about 802, at the time when Jayavarman II was founding Angkor, for as we have already mentioned, it was certainly built by Cham architects. After that landmark, the earliest monument preserved at Mi-son, tower F 1, begins what is called the Hoa-lai style, and besides the eponymous Hoa-lai shrine it includes towers A' 1, 2 and 3, F 3 and E 1 at Mi-son, and then, towards its end, Po Dam and tower C 7 at Mi-son.

MAP III IN APPENDIX

Although the Cham lived at the foot of mountains where there was no lack of stone, they remained loyal users of brick for their buildings, employing sandstone only sparingly for ornamental carving and sculpture. But though limited in use of materials, they nonetheless put up wonderful buildings, which were better than the corresponding Khmer buildings. No doubt the reason for this was that they never lost their sense of material, respecting its natural qualities, whereas the Khmer were all too inclined to pile up any material and then carve it into shape to express their symbolism.

In this respect the towers at Hoa-lai are the most successful in Cham architecture. Their strong cubic mass rises well over 60 feet, crowned by the classic scheme of repetitive and progressively diminishing storeys. Inside, a corbelled dome with a steep profile rises up rather like some immense chimney. Ornament is limited to the major elements, door

Dong-duong, Quang-nam, Central Vietnam. First tower-sanctuary of the eastern court on the west side. Cham art; Dong-duong style: third quarter of the 9th century. Monastery dedicated to Lakshmindra-lokesvara by the king Indravarman II in 875. *Brick and stucco; height of the tower 14 m.*

frames, angle pilasters and accents in the superstructure. It thus keeps its functional role of stressing the fundamental structure while showing the most assured and finished taste. Such strong, harmonious, and rhythmic composition makes Cham shrines so beautiful that one can but deplore the general ignorance of their existence, since the reputation of Angkor, has put them unfairly in the shade.

The most characteristic element in this style is the blind arches with many curves above the doors and windows. Derived from the *torana* or arched lintels of the portico of an Indian temple, they play here the same part as the Khmer pediment. But, keeping closer to its origin, this element is also comparatively more logical in that, having no tympanum, it projects over the door like a penthouse, or a very accentuated niche, in front of the facade. The front part of these false arches is carved with foliage swallowed at the top by a monster who serves as a sham key-stone. Although this motif very quickly degenerates, at the start it is comprehensible, for a thicker branch emphasises the shape of the arch, and the foliage is arranged in the shape of natural leaves, curving out at the base in elegant volutes which help to define the profile. The pilasters, four on each face, have identical foliages between two smooth bands. Plants in similar taste are carved on the walls between the pilasters. At the bottom miniature houses are carved with little people in them, recalling the theme found on the beautiful pedestal in Mi-son E 1. Beneath the cornice runs a garland of leaves and flowers, imitated from India, which marks the beginning of the superstructure. The doors are framed by small octagonal columns of sandstone, decorated with a heavy ring in the middle, but seldom supporting the lintel dear to the Khmer.

We do not know much about the sculpture of this time, since we only possess a few examples such as the guardians carved on the walls at Hoa-lai. They wear diadems of goldsmith's work and heavy circular earrings, belts and a loin-cloth symmetrically draped on either side of the hips, reminiscent both of Javanese and of Khmer works, though they would never be confused with the latter because the difference in racial type is already so pronounced.

The Dong-duong style

In the third quarter of the 9th century, the impressive ensemble of the great Mahayana monastery at Dong-duong marks a very individual phase of Cham art. It was founded in 875 by Indravarman II at his capital of Indrapura, and was dedicated to Lakshmindralokesvara. Other shrines dedicated to the same cult were erected by that King's successors – that of My-duc (Quang-binh) being the most notable – which proves the remarkable progress of Mahayana Buddhism. But it seems to have been limited to that period. It is also worth noting that these temples were dedicated to personal cults, hence the choice of an Avalokitesvara instead of Buddha. Though Buddhists, they betray the same aspiration to deify the kings as had been expressed by the worshippers of Siva at other periods.

Siva. Statue from the retable in the Great Hall of group III at Dong-duong, Quang-nam, Central Vietnam. Dong-duong style. 3rd quarter of the 9th century. *Sandstone; height 0,40 m. Tourane Museum.*

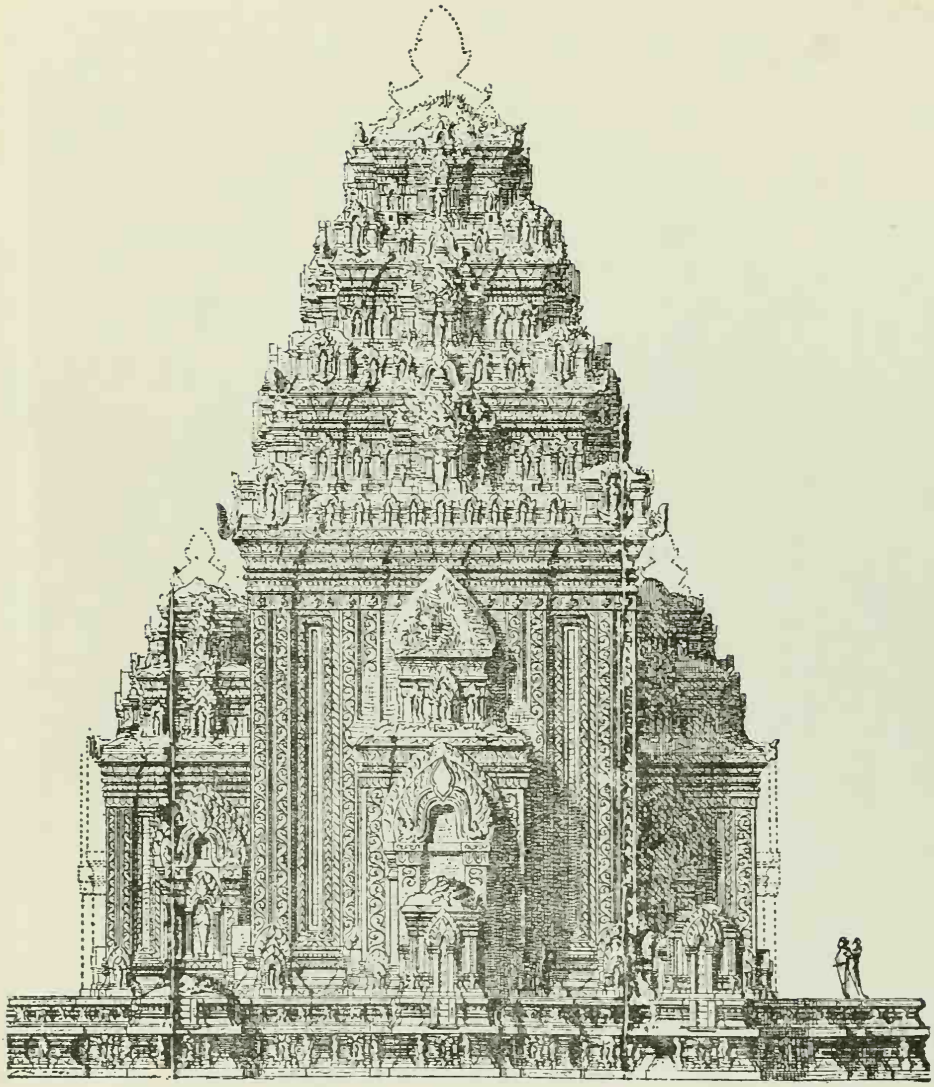


FIG. 22 — *Southern facade of Tower A 1 at Mi-son. Cham art of Mi-son A 1 style; second quarter of the Xth century.*

Dong-duong is particularly impressive in that its encircling wall measures about half a mile. In the middle there is a complex lay-out of brick buildings arranged in successive courts along an east-west axis, each section being enclosed and dominated by an entrance-pavilion with threatening stone guardians. In the first court, that furthest to the west and so the last to be reached by a pilgrim entering from the east, there rose the central tower in the midst of eighteen shrines. This tower was open on every side and contained a superb altar, backed by a retable, on which formerly rested the statue of the Avalokitesvara. In the third court there was an impressive room, which once had a wooden roof, and was probably the place where the monks prayed. It had an altar with carved reliefs below, and a retable behind. An imposing statue of Buddha which was throned on it has been found. Brick *stupas* in lines completed the arrangement of all the courts. Their shape, most probably derived from China, is a grooved cylinder.

The architecture of the main tower-sanctuary shows that progress had been made since the time of Hoa-lai. The floral ornament of the false arches is richer. Not only at the bottom but the whole way up, sprays spread outwards making a complicated and very characteristic pattern with multiple indentations. There are always four pilasters on each face, and their ornament is the opposite to the Hoa-lai fashion. The smooth and slightly inside central part is framed by two floral bands. Besides its festoons the garland under the cornice has a floral pattern. As this style draws to an end, the little columns framing the doors become engaged in the wall leaving only three faces visible. PLATE P. 137

The floral ornament is the basic feature of this style, giving life to every shape and every detail, and indeed a "horror vacui" leads the sculptors to pile on too much decoration. It quickly degenerates, and in the end gets reduced to the repetition of tiny motifs, such as crotchets or s-shapes in rows. It has fairly been described as "wormlike", and must be connected with the "wind and cloud" patterns on Chinese bronzes and, even more, with some examples of Vietnamese sculpture from this period.

There are enough reliefs and statues from Dong-duong to give us a good idea of the sculpture of this time. It is the most original and interesting phase of Cham art, majestic and almost disturbingly vital, with racial characteristics freely stressed. One does not easily forget those faces with their thick lips emphasised by the moustache, flat noses, heavy lidded eyes and thick joining eyebrows. In repose these supple, modelled figures are most gracious, but tense, and ready to spring up. In movement these works, especially the guardians of the gates, really appear to cut the air. It is worth noting that Cham sculptors very soon got away from the frontal pose, no doubt because they had to decorate altars with retables which could be seen from at least three sides. The main idol, placed at the back, may have been visible only from the front, but the subsidiary PLATE P. 139

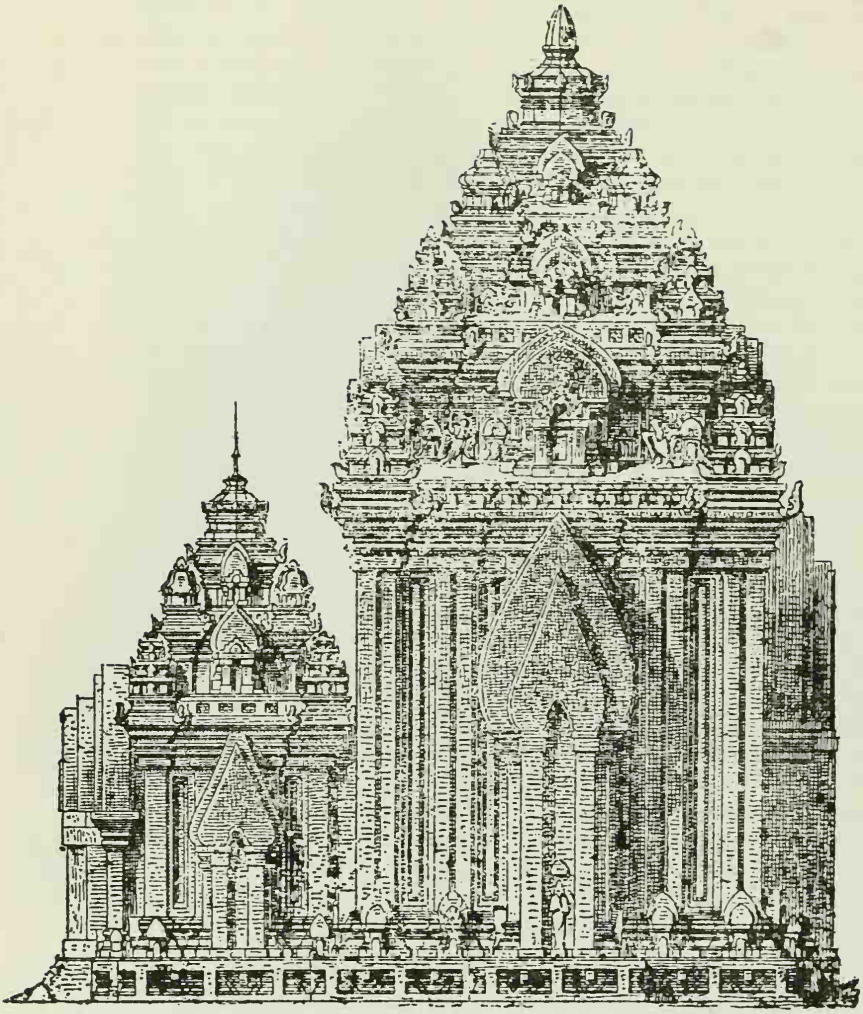


FIG. 23 — *Northern facade of the main tower of the Po Nagar at Nha-trang. Cham art of the end of the Mi-son A 1 style; XIIth century.*

figures guardians and fantastic animals, were all bound to be looking at the idol, and consequently had to be seen from the side, or even from the back, by the faithful. The sculptors turned this necessity to advantage, inventing types for all sorts of minor figures and animals in the round, and most felicitously peopling their lovely compositions with them. Yet this is not exactly free-standing sculpture as the Greeks, or the Khmer, conceived it, for it is only the mass that gives the sense of movement, and not the play of muscles and the whole body.

Just because it did not last long, it is well worth stressing the aesthetic basis of the Dong-duong style. Javanese influence shows in several features. But most of the credit for its originality is due to the Cham. In its very vitality lay seeds of decay. At Dong-duong itself a sufficient mastery kept this wild energy under control, but in later monuments the classic sense for line and proportion have gone by the board. Hence the towers of Mi-son which come at the end of this phase (towers A 10 to 13, B 2, B 4, and finally A' 4, E 2, E 3 and E 5) are just incoherent, proving that that vein had been worked out and it was time for a reaction.

MAP III IN APPENDIX

The Mi-son A 1 style

Partly because the Dong-duong style had found its way into a cul-de-sac, and partly on account of the strong influence both of Khmer art and of that of central Java then at its zenith, the Mi-son A 1 style heralds the anticipated reaction. The new style took shape about 910 and continued throughout the 10th century. The lovely tower of Khuong-my marks the transition, and the style is seen in full flower in the noble tower of Mi-son A 1 and most of the other buildings, including all the most important ones, at that site. We can trace every stage of the transformation. With very many buildings to chose from, the most significant are the following: shrines A 8 and 9, and the enclosing wall of group A, B 3 to 8, 11 to 14, the larger buildings in group C (C 1 to 5), and from group D, at least D 1, 2, 4 and 6. This is the finest flowering of Cham art, and it is natural to associate it with the reign of Indravarman III who, from 918 onwards, revived the glories of his land so that it continued to flourish until the end of the century and was able to resist the ever more threatening attacks of the Vietnamese. After the beginning of the 11th century, when the Cham had to fight foot by foot for survival, less sculpture was carved and fewer and poorer buildings were erected. The long period of transition to a new style, that of Binh-dinh at the beginning of the 12th century, is marked by the Po Nagar of Nha-trang (main tower), Chanh-lo and tower E 4 at Mi-son.

FIG. 22

MAP III IN APPENDIX

FIG. 23

Architecture again becomes much more assured and harmonious in design. The main tower A 1 at Mi-son is one of the finest Cham monuments and the most outstanding brick building of Further India. With the main body rather higher than usual and the upper storeys slightly smaller, its chaste and distinguished outline rises to the sky. The ornamentation, now very much more discreet, allows one to enjoy the forms. The arch

FIG. 24

is open and, with nearly straight sides, can almost be circumscribed by an equilateral triangle. Lily-shaped ornaments standing out against flat bands are the decoration. The pilasters, elongated to suit the dominant tendency of the building, have a plain gap in the middle framed by two bands, with a new pattern of long leaved boughs imitated from Java. The walls between the pilasters are soberly decorated by panels with mouldings and figures under arches. Some of these arches again show Javanese influence, having a monster's head at the top and the usual *makaras* below. Little columns are still engaged, but their shape is new, consisting of two half balusters on top of one another with a ring between. The cornice supporting the first false storey projects emphatically, having first a concave and then a convex moulding. The angles of the tower are accented by spear-shaped sandstone carvings which make them seem, when delineated against the sky, surrounded by flames. The false storeys, diminishing in size and stepped more and more emphatically back, have sandstone carvings imitating the main building, and so complete the silhouette. The supple and seductive sculpture of this time, as well as this elegant and harmonious architecture, marks a reaction against the almost savage vitality of Dong-duong. Portions of an enormous pedestal and other sculpture from Tra-kieu are the most important examples. The pedestal supporting the sacred *linga* is decorated with a frieze in lovely blue-grey sandstone representing dancers and musicians performing for the delight of the god. The opulent curves of the bodies stil bring India to mind, but the rhythm is native Cham. The characteristics of this phase stand out more clearly in the free-standing sculpture. There is great gentleness in the faces with their almond eyes under fine well marked eyebrows and the smile floating on their sensual lips. Jewels are more discreet. A long fold of stuff falling from the belt emphasises the movement. The exquisite dancers decorating the moulding of the Tra-kieu pedestal show the spirit of this sculpture at its best. Their anatomically impossible but plastically delightful arabesques are fragile in their grace and smiling in their harmony, and are indeed the perfect incarnation of the golden age of Cham art. For, less lucky than Cambodia whose star had only begun to rise, Champa, already hard pressed by Vietnam, after the Mi-son A 1 phase began that slow decadence which, in spite of some bouts of desperate energy, was to end in total disappearance.

PLATE P. 145

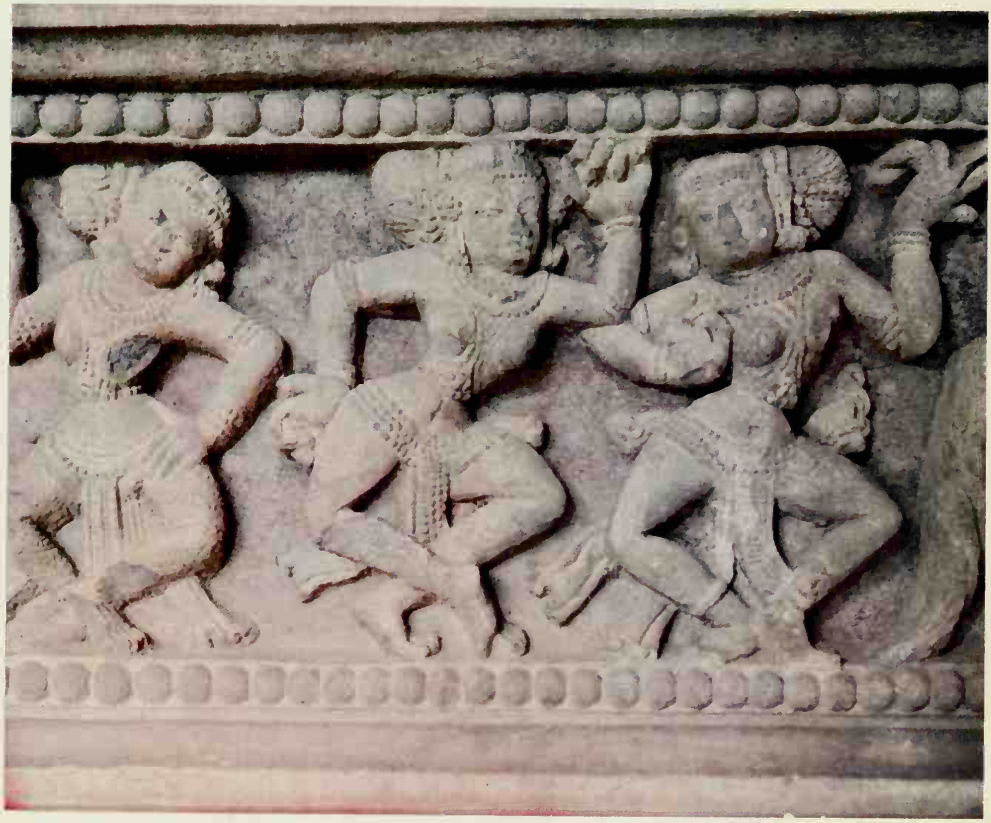
PLATE P. 148

SIAM

The delta of the Me-nam and the northern part of the Malayan peninsula lived first in the shadow of Fu-nan and then in that of Chen-la, and was naturally later attracted into the orbit of Angkor, for the Mon population of that region was racially close to the Khmer. We know very little about the country's history during the 9th century. It seems that there were principalities of little importance here and there, and the few inscriptions preserved attest the progress of Khmer influence. Eventually, by the beginning of the 11th century, the land had become such an integral

part of the world of Angkor that, as already mentioned, Suryavarman I, one of the greatest of the kings of Angkor, was in origin a prince of Ligor. It is important to note that at this same time the Mon and Pyu of the Irawadi delta had also been unified by the great king Anoratha (1044 to 1077), and after converting his country to that faith he built at Pagan a great series of Hinayana Buddhist temples. It is important to remember that in spite of Khmer influence the land of Dvaravati never for a moment renounced this faith and became a most orthodox centre of Hinayana Buddhism. Strengthened by the conversion of Burma, and having constant contact through that country with Ceylon, Hinayana

Pedestal from Tra-kieu, Quang-nam, Central Vietnam. Frieze decorating the base of the *linga*. Cham art; style of Mi-son A 1: first half of the 10th century. *Sandstone; height 0,40 m. Tourane Museum.*



doctrine was slowly to gain ground towards the east. As we have already stressed, when Suryavarman I came to the throne Buddhist subjects come back into Khmer art, but with a predominantly Mahayana iconography. However, under the surface the Hinayana doctrine of renunciation was constantly gaining ground, and in the end it was to triumph. So this conquest of the Siva-worshipping kings of Angkor brought within their dominions that faith which finally was to give sanction to their disappearance, even if it was not actually one of the reasons for their fall.

The importance of Siam in the history of art at this time is that it provided a permanent school of Buddhist art, introducing many sculptural types and iconographic conventions which later spread everywhere when Indochina was converted to the Hinayana faith. Unluckily we have little archaeological evidence from this time. Clearly the art of Dvaravati was constantly connected with that of the Burmese centres of Pegu and Pagan, and through them with India and Ceylon. Therefore, to trace its formative period, researches would have to be carried very far afield, and, apart from excavations in the neighbourhood of Nakhon Pathom, such a labour has not even been begun.

At Nakhon Pathom some large brick buildings were found, probably dating from some time in the 10th century, and they give at least some impression of the art of the time. There are brick *stupas,* Indian in inspiration, which show no important innovations, but the reliquary-shrines or *chaityas* are more interesting. They are composed of a massive brick cube surmounted by stepped-back storeys, and decorated with carvings of Buddhist figures under arches. The idea of such a building comes from India, as does the plan of a gallery enabling pilgrims to walk round, a plan which may have been learnt from Burmese rather than directly from Indian examples. These buildings are generally placed on top of imposing terraces; this brings our thoughts back to the central part of Indochina, for such terraces were a feature of Khmer art from the beginning and led to the temple-mountain scheme. There are other points in common between these two great religious systems. The ornament is generally executed in stucco, a technique which seems to have been particularly favoured in that region. The most interesting monuments of this sort are Wat Phra Pathom and Wat Phra Men. Wat Phra Pathom seems in its present state at least, to be the older. It is from such buildings that 13th century architecture in the north of Siam is derived. At San Chao, which is also in the region of Nakhon Pathom, a monastery has been found with many buildings reminiscent of Dong-duong.

The Dvaravati free-standing sculpture is chiefly interesting for its iconography. There is a whole repertoire of characteristic statues, in particular a figure of Buddha holding out both forearms symmetrically in front, robed in a single garment, but without the fold back over the shoulder as in the post-Gupta Indian models from which, by way of

Fu-nan, the type was ultimately derived. When later introduced into Cambodia, this type became very popular and was one of the sources of the Bayon sculpture. It also inspired Thai Buddhist art. Another Mon Buddha type, seated in European fashion on a high chair with the legs hanging down in front, was not so popular and remained peculiar to its country of origin. On the other hand the figure of Buddha seated and meditating under the hood of an erect *naga* was in high favour in Siam and inspired some features in the last phase of the art of Angkor. So the essential role of Siam in the field of Khmer art was, in the 10th and 11th centuries, to establish the repertoire of Hinayana Buddhist art. This later triumphed throughout Indianised Indochina, when the Hindu kings of Angkor and Mi-son had fallen and power had passed into the hands of the Thai, who had come into contact with high civilisation in this region.

VIETNAM

We know that down to the 10th century the Tonkin delta was just a Chinese colony. During more than a thousand years of occupation, the Vietnamese assimilated their masters' culture so well that it left its mark for ever. Taught by the Chinese they turned their country into an intensively cultivated garden, and they also learnt to understand their own strength and the value of the isolation which protected them. Finally, taking advantage of the decadence of the T'ang emperors, a national dynasty seized power in 938. Of course Annam continued to recognise the nominal sovereignty of the Sons of Heaven, to ask for their help in need, and above all to use both Chinese writing and laws; and the civilisation of which they were the expression. But, because of their progress, the Vietnamese began to feel suffocated in their delta. As they only knew how to cultivate lowlands, the sole plains into which they could overflow lay to the south, in the land of Champa. We have already spoken about the beginning of the consequent mortal struggle. The Vietnamese dynasties first of the Former Lê (980 to 1009) and then of the Ly (1010 to 1225) gradually extended their hold until Champa was completely destroyed. But, surprisingly enough, it was demographic pressure rather than superior civilisation which led to this triumph. Although they had kept the forms of Chinese administration, even though somewhat loosely applied, the Vietnamese nation derived its unity much more from its homogeneity than from any centralised or dynamic civilisation. It was formed out of the juxtaposition of identical but relatively independent cells each providing for its own subsistence. Political power was broken up and there were no great rulers. That the Vietnamese gained ground to the south was due to the weight of their physical presence. Intellectually the Vietnamese were, thanks to China, provided with tools adequate to their state of organisation. They had had no need to create anything new, and it was natural that they should lose even the taste for doing so. The kings and the representatives of the aristocracy

Pedestal from Tra-kieu, Quang-nam, Central Vietnam. Dancing girl decorating one of the mouldings. Cham art; Mi-son A 1 style; first half of the 10th century. *Sandstone; height 0,63 m. Tourane Museum.*

were content with Confucian and Taoist cults, vaguely Theist, and limited to a very narrow section of the community because they depended on knowledge of the written characters. The people were satisfied with their local divinities, so there was not the ferment of any great centralising and dynamic religion, such as that which supported the power of the kings of Cambodia and Champa, or stirred the people of Burma and Siam. It is therefore not surprising to find no art worthy of the name. Certainly the Vietnamese continued to learn enough from China to be able always to produce things of luxury for their material needs, and sometimes these were really beautiful. This is particularly true of the

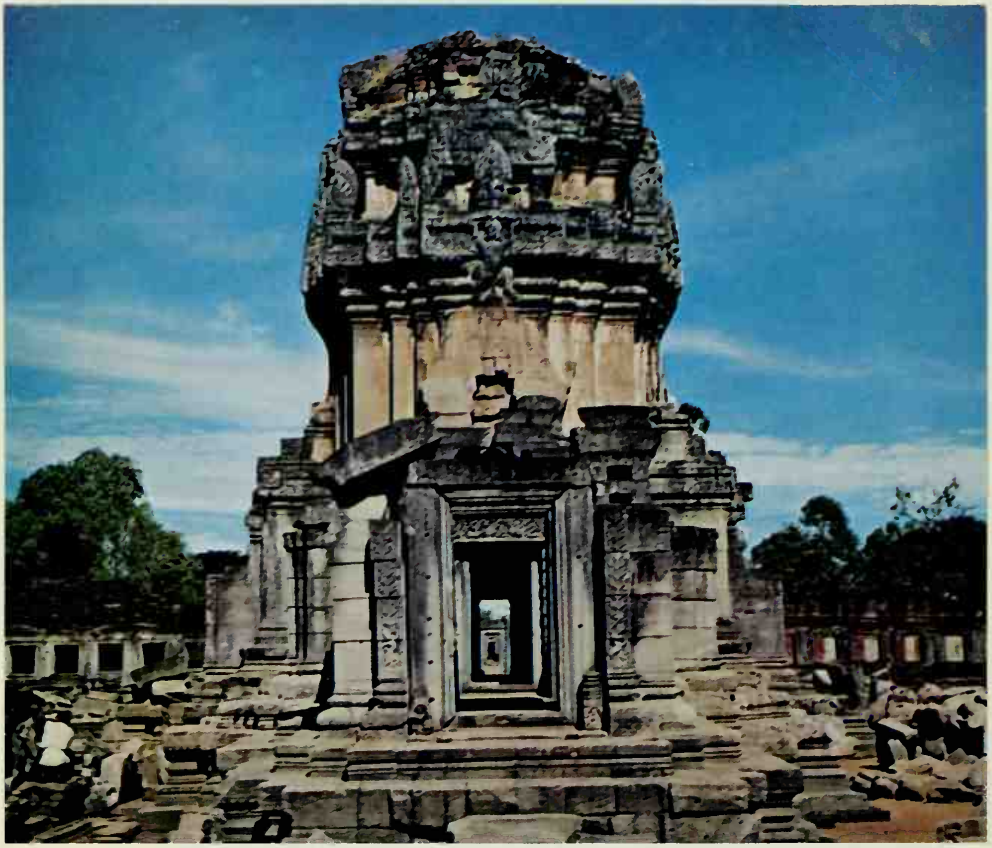
pottery from the kilns of Bat-trang, near Hanoi, and Than-hoa in the Sung period. These robust pots, with decoration in brown glaze over light green, are among the loveliest creations of the innumerable schools of provincial Chinese ceramics. But still they do not rise above the level of craftsmanship.

Only in their Buddhist sculpture do the Vietnamese attain a higher level. We have already traced the distant origins of the Buddhist faith in these regions. The Mahayana fervour, sweeping over China at the time of the Six Dynasties and the T'ang, was felt as far afield as Tonkin. We know that important monasteries were built there in the 9th century, but unluckily almost nothing has been rediscovered.

The name Dai-la has been given to the first period of Vietnamese art. The first phase is that of Phat-tich, represented by a few fragments of sculpture found at the pagoda of that name at Bac-ninh, and connected with a foundation of the Chinese general Kao Pien between 866 and 870. T'ang influence predominates in the decoration, but interesting reminiscences of Indian art as transformed in its passage across central Asia can be traced. Contacts with Cham art are also manifest. Some ornamental bricks and pottery architectural fragments found at Dai-la-thanh, near Hanoi, the capital of the T'ang governors which gave its name to this style, have been dated to the first half of the 10th century. There have been similar finds at Co-loa, the capital of the first dynasty which attained independence in 939. But the interest of these fragments is mainly documentary and aesthetic judgement cannot be based on them.

Then, at the end of the 10th and throughout the 11th century, comes the Ly style, called after the dynasty. We have architectural fragments from the second *stupa* at Phat-tich, built in 1057 by the Ly King Thanh-ton, from the *stupa* of Long-doi-son (Ha-nam) built in 1121 by Ly Nhon-ton, and from the tower at Binh-son (Vinh-yen) which dates back to the same time. But all this is purely Chinese, particularly the tower-*stupa* shape. Only the "worm" decoration makes one consider possible Cham influence.

In conclusion one must admit that, archaeological interest apart, one would not waste one's time on the products of these people, were it not that later they were to dominate the peninsula and assure the triumph of Chinese over Indian ways.



Phimai, Korat, Siam. Southern facade of the tower-sanctuary with its portico. Khmer art; beginning of the Angkor Vat style: first years of the 12th century.Temple founded by Jayavarman VI (1080—1107) and Dharanindravarman I (1107—1112). *Sandstone; height of the tower 18 m.*

VIII. THE KHMER CLASSICAL PERIOD: ANGKOR VAT

At the end of the 11th century a new dynasty came to power at Angkor. This dynasty was to lead its people to the zenith of their prosperity and glory, which is that unique moment when all that men have experienced and discovered falls into perfect harmony, the moment called the classical age. Khmer civilisation which had been ascending ever since the foundation of Angkor in 802, reached its highest point in the reign of Suryavarman II (1113 to 1150), and Angkor Vat is rightly accepted as the universal symbol of Khmer art, for its incomparable stones hold all of greatest value therein.

It is interesting to note that the various countries of south east Asia reached the same political zenith at almost the same moment: Champa under Harivarman IV, Burma under first Anoratha and then Kyanzittha, and Java under Airlangga. Indian influence had come to each at the same time, and the rise of each had been parallel, bearing the same fruit at the same time. Unluckily it was also the last moment of glory, for the decline of Cambodia and of all the other Indianised states of the peninsula began to set in almost immediately afterwards.

THE DYNASTY OF MAHIDARAPURA

Jayavarman VI, the founder of the new dynasty, seized the throne from the unworthy successors of Udayadityavarman II in 1080. Before that he had been simply a provincial governor, coming from the north of Cambodia, and claiming to belong to the aristocracy of Mahidarapura. Once again we see power passing to a man coming from the cradle of the Khmer race, as if only the highlands could keep the race free from the enervating effects of the plains. His claim to power was disputed by other pretenders, and we find his foundations nowhere but in the north of the country, at such places as Vat Phu, Preah Vihear and Phimai. At Angkor itself, where he may have resided only for a short stay, there is no trace of his building activities. After his death in 1107 his brothers reigned for a short time, and then his grand nephew Sutyavarman II gained power at Angkor in 1113.

PLATE P. 150

It may be that beneath the outward glory of this new sovereign, the "Protégé of the Sun", lay a reality less pleasant than his inscriptions and his monuments would have us believe. We take the view that after the Baphuon period Khmer power began to disintegrate for many complex reasons which may be collectively attributed to old age. Thence the reign of Suryavarman II inevitably brings to mind that of Louis XIV, which also began under brilliant auspices and ended in long years of bitterness. The parallel could be pressed further feature by feature, Versailles cor-

responding to Angkor Vat. But, though the foundations may already have been undermined, the building erected by the great Khmer king remains in its majesty undoubtedly the highest expression of Khmer genius.

Suryavarman II was a conqueror who, having gained the throne, won control of the whole of central Indochina. He began by subduing Champa, and thence, by land and sea, drove his forces against Annam, even threatening the neighbourhood of Thanh-hoa. No Khmer king before him had penetrated so far to the north. As the frightened Cham king refused to help him in this struggle, Suryavarman simply pushed him into oblivion and annexed the country in 1145. To the west he strengthened his hold over the kingdoms of Lopburi and Lamphun, and his frontier touched the kingdom of Pagan, while to the south he ruled as far as Chaiya in the heart of the Malayan peninsula. Even the Chinese historians, ready though they always are to scorn anybody who is not a son of Han, stress his incomparable power. For a moment the Khmer king was the most powerful ruler in Asia, apart from the Emperor of China.

But reverses followed almost immediately on his victories and cast a cloud over the end of his reign. In 1149 the Cham succeeded in regaining their freedom, and remained obsessed with thoughts of revenge. In 1150 an attempt at an overland attack against Annam, ended in catastrophe, the Khmer armies dying of fever in the wild passes leading down from Tran Ninh towards Tonkin. Overwhelmed by these disasters Suryavarman died shortly afterwards. A cousin, Dharanindravarman II, succeeded him. It would hardly be necessary to mention his reign, were he not both the first Buddhist king of Angkor, and the father of Jayavarman VII. But his son did not succeed him immediately. For reasons that remain obscure, he allowed another claimant to step in before him, a claimant who was soon assassinated — 1165 — by an ambitious minister. This deed brought no good to the usurper. In 1177 the Cham came up the Mekong with a huge fleet, took Angkor by surprise, killed the King, thoroughly plundered the vast accumulations of wealth in the city, and finally set the capital of Indianised Asia on fire.

THE ANGKOR VAT STYLE

The style of Angkor Vat grows naturally out of that of Baphuon and takes shape in the reign of Jayavarman VI. It shows no decline, but also no particular genius, just complete mastery of the means at command. Perhaps because of the troubles during his reign, Jayavarman VI built no temple-mountain. But his foundations in the provinces prove that the scheme for temples on one level was perfected during his reign. The most interesting example is Phimai, near Korat, built by the King and his brothers between 1106 and 1112. In the middle of a fine gallery which encloses the whole, rises the tower-sanctuary itself with an imposing portal. The sandstone is carved with remarkable dexterity, and the proportions are carefully thought out making this temple, which is in fact fairly

PLATE P. 150

small, appear imposing. There are Buddhist scenes of great beauty on the lintels of the tower-sanctuary. Whereas all the other foundations of Jayavarman VI, Preah Vihear, Phnom Sandak and Vat Phu, are strictly Sivaite, it is significant that he should have built a Buddhist temple in the land of Siam, a land whose particular vocation we have already stressed.

It is most certainly due to the personality of Suryavarman II that the style of Angkor Vat was to prove the great moment of Khmer art. One may go further and say that Angkor Vat could only have been conceived by a single man of genius. The unity of style, proportion and conception force one to that conclusion. We shall never know the name of the great architect, for all Khmer artists are hopelessly anonymous. We do know however, that the great King knew how to choose this architect and how to give him the means with which to express himself.

The architecture of Angkor Vat

When he had secured his power at Angkor, Suryavarman II was bound to try and found his own city, as befitted the great king from whom everything began anew. But if one studies the map of the capital in his day, one finds that there was scarcely space left in which to do this, after the construction of the western Baray, the Baphuon, and the city (almost the whole of Angkor Thom) which went with it. In fact, if one wanted to remain in the centre of Angkor to take advantage of its amenities, one had to be content with building a temple, for the whole ground was laid out in one almost uninterrupted series of cities, marked out by moats, roads and tanks.

Therefore the king tried to find a sufficiently large and unencumbered area on which to build at least a temple worthy of the scale of his ambition. The site he chose was at the south eastern angle of the former capital of Yasovarman, which was centred round the Bakheng. There rose Angkor Vat, the temple-mountain of Suryavarman II, which must have been begun soon after his accession, about 1113, and was only just finished at the time of his death in 1150.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

A most unusual feature is the main facade of the temple which faces west. Perhaps this was simply due to the nature of the site, for by that means it could command the great road running down from the Baphuon towards the lake, whereas the Siemreap river flowed past to the east. But perhaps there was a symbolic intention to which we shall return later. The sacred enclosure formed a rectangle of some 1,700 by 1,500 yards, enclosed by a magnificent moat more than 200 yards wide. The moat was completely paved with steps allowing access to the water at any level, and it was fed by a canal from the Siemreap river. In that way the moat served as a tank for the inhabitants of the city and, no doubt, of the royal palace too. For we think that at that time the king lived nearby, perhaps within the temple enclosure, and not near Phimeanakas as his predecessors had done.

Angkor Vat, Angkor. Western facade of the temple. Style of Angkor Vat; first half of the 12th century. Temple-mountain

of Suryavarman II (1113–1150). *Sandstone; height to the summit of the central tower 65 m; length of the facade 187 m.*

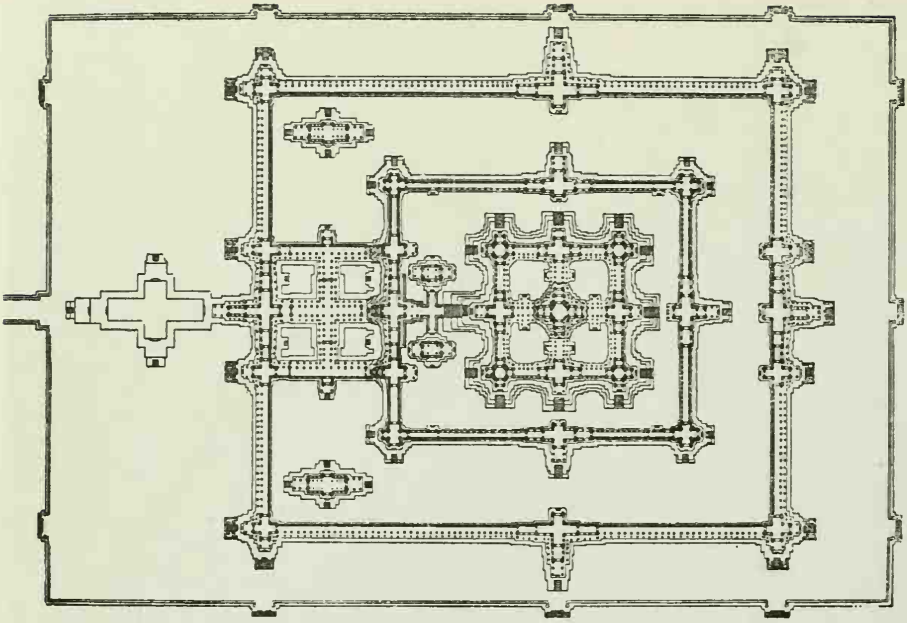


FIG. 24 — *Plan of Angkor Vat, Angkor.*

Across the western moat, a splendid road on a dike lined by a *naga*-balustrade, gave access to the main gate of the enclosure. This gate-house was some 260 yards long, and exactly reproduced, in miniature, the facade of the temple itself, thus making a prelude to the symphony which would strike up when the gate was passed. On either side of a main tower, shaped like a tiara, spread symmetrical gallery-wings terminating in a smaller tower. The outside wall of these galleries is replaced by columns, and by a half-vault also resting on columns. The calm rhythm of this noble colonnade, duplicated by its reflection in the moat, and crowned by towers darting up like flames, is by itself one of the most remarkable creations of Khmer spatial architecture.

Within the gate, a paved road 400 yards long leads to the temple itself. It measures 223 yards by 242 at the base, while the top of the main tower FIG. 24 is more than 220 feet above the roadway. Structurally speaking it is a three-stepped pyramid. Each storey is punctuated by towers at the corners and pavilions in the centre, at the top of the flights of stairs. The main tower on the third storey is connected by galleries supported on pillars

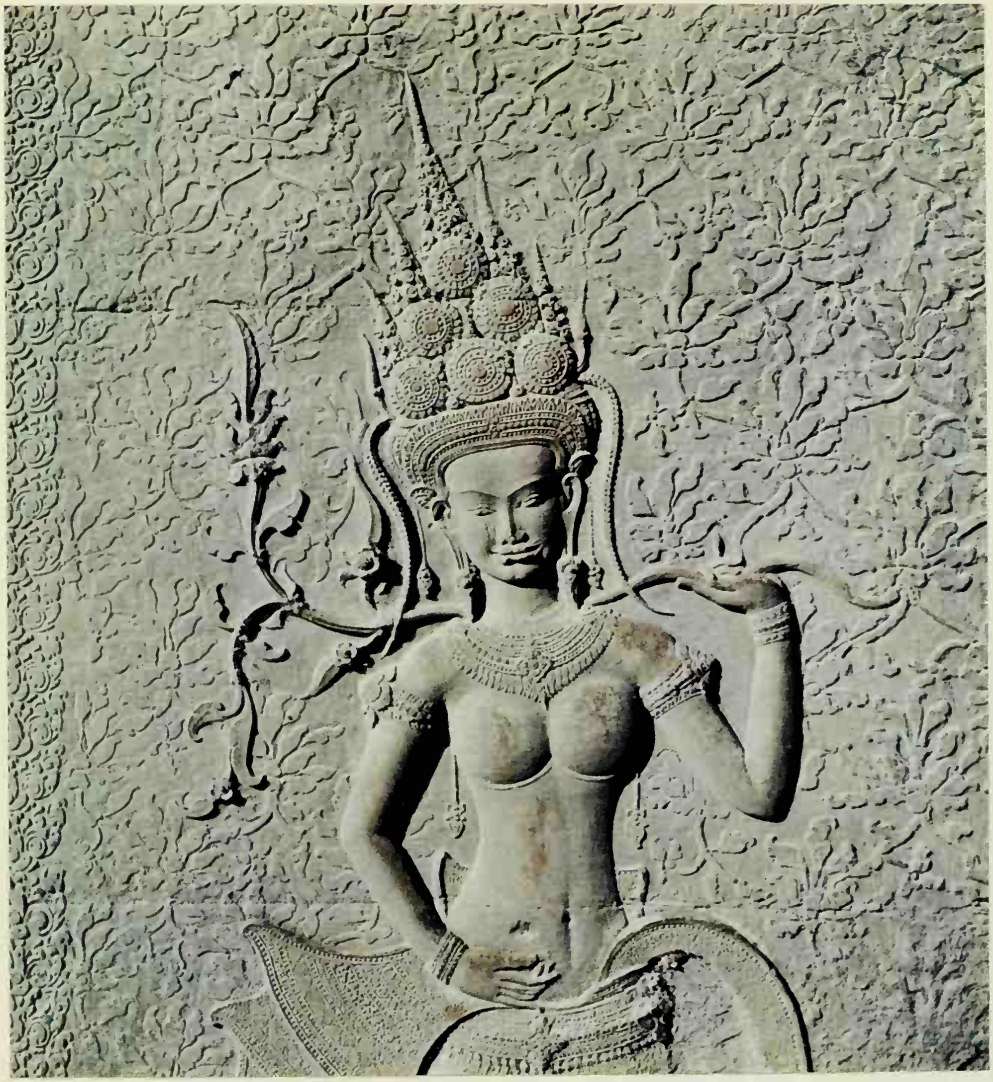
with all its axial pavilions, and is thus surrounded by four cloistered courts. On the western face of the first storey three flights of stairs lead up to as many pillared galleries which lead on to the corresponding flights of the second storey, and the stairs are roofed over by stepped back vaults. The pinnacles of the temple rising one above another over the forest of pillars of the cloisters, stand out clearly against the sky.

Most of the elements of this design had been discovered and used by Khmer architects of the time of the Baphuon. What is unique at Angkor Vat is the scale and the skill with which they are employed. The understanding of perspective is quite astonishing, and shows that the Khmer of that time knew all about spatial geometry. The length of the road between the entrance pavilion and the temple is roughly twice that of the western facade. We had imagined however, that only Greek architects knew that, in order to see a monument in all its grandeur, it was necessary to stand back twice the length of its greatest dimension. The height of the three terraces is increased regularly, so that the spectator, as soon as he comes in, sees a perfect pyramid before him. Terraces of equal height would, in effect, have concealed a storey behind the gallery of the lower level. With the same aim in view, each storey is staggered back towards the east, that is to say away from the main entrance, as compared to the one below. Without that device, the summit would appear to topple over towards the spectator. Finally, each element is kept in exact proportion. The interplay of these volumes is so perfect that Angkor Vat, which is in fact chiefly composed of horizontal lines, has the élan of a pyramid. The secret lies in the powerful rhythm of the terraces rising one above the other over the waves of the vaults, culminating in the soaring shocks of the tiara of towers. Only a man of exceptional ability could have conceived such a masterpiece. One can almost see him working out his subtle harmonies on a maquette. And when one realises that in sheer size the temple is roughly equal to the pyramid of Kephren, one is aghast at the thought of the labour involved in quarrying, transporting, placing and shaping such a mountain of stone.

PLATE PP. 154/155

The decoration of the temple

The temple's decoration is at least as worthy of admiration as the architecture. One must confess that, when compared with the Baphuon for instance, the ornament is rather too superficial. It obscures the lines, forgetting its true role, which should be to stress the skeleton of the temple. Lintels, small columns and pilasters no longer fulfill any structural function, and the surfaces are treated independently, in some sense as an afterthought, and without a precise aim. For this Khmer construction methods are to blame, as they first built the rough mass af the temple, and then left the sculptors a free hand to decorate it, divorcing architecture and ornament. Even allowing for this, the quality of the ornament both enchants and astonishes by its incredible skill. There must have been whole armies of sculptors at work, but one looks in vain for a single



Angkor Vat, Angkor. Western entrance pavilion on the western side of the north tower; southern panel; ornamental *apsaras*. Angkor Vat style: first half of the 12th century. *Sandstone; height of the figure 1,20 m.*

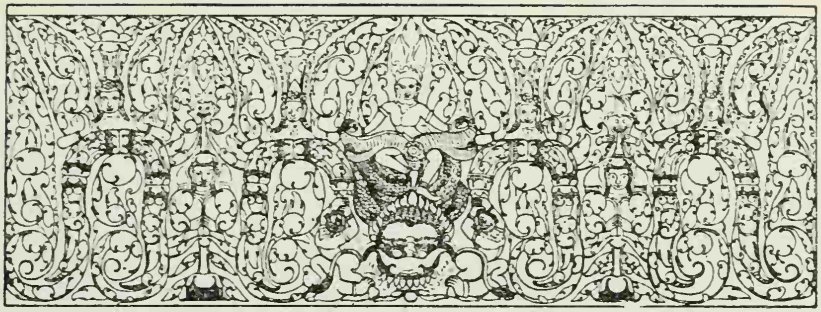


Fig. 25 — *Lintel carved with figures from the beginning of the Angkor Vat style; first half of the XIIth century.*

weakness in all these acres of carved draperies. Pilasters, plinths and the panels of the shrines are covered with tremulous leaves imitated from hangings of silk brocade. We know moreover that there were silken ceiling hangings in the temples, often imported from China, and, for the first time, one can detect a certain Chinese influence in the decoration. On the doorposts, lintels and pediments, a multitude of tiny people enact with never-failing verve the stories of heroic legends. The capitals of the pillars and the cornices of the galleries are decorated with wonderful lotus-petal friezes. Finally, on all the walls there are the smiling figures of *Apsaras,* those divine dancers who lavish upon the gods and upon the happy elect the inexhaustible joys of paradise. Despite some clumsiness, particularly in the rendering of anatomy, they are most seductive with their calm features and enigmatic smiles, their sensual breasts, and the fantastic elaboration of their headdresses and their clothes. It has been found that none of these figures, of which there are nearly two thousand at Angkor Vat, are exactly identical. Once more, the number and quality of the craftsmen required goes beyond anything one can conceive.

Fig. 25
Fig. 26
Plate p. 158

The reliefs

In our view more wonderful than the architecture and its carving, things which have their parallels elsewhere in Khmer art, are the reliefs at Angkor Vat, which take their place among the greatest sculptural creations of humanity. The gallery on the first storey is entirely consecrated to them. With this aim, the external wall has been replaced by pillars, so that floods of light strike on the inner wall. This wall is easily accessible to visitors, and with its uninterrupted frieze of reliefs over six feet high, comprises, in all, well over a mile of sculpture.

The Vishnu legend predominates; the churning of the ocean ordained by a god, the story of Krishna, or tales from the Indian epics of the

Angkor Vat, Angkor. Southern half of the western gallery on the first story. Bas-relief illustrating a scene from the Mahabharata: battle of Kurukshetra between the Pandava and the Kaurava. Angkor Vat style: first half of the 12th century. *Sandstone; height of the scene 0,73 m.*

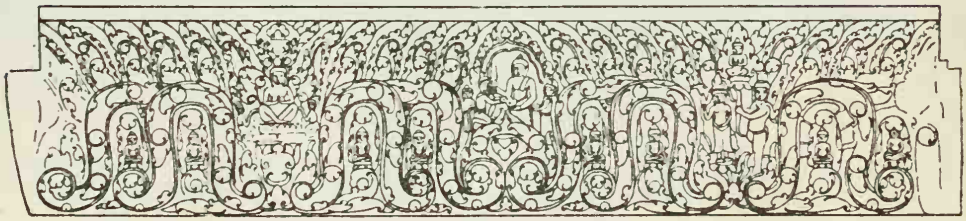
Mahabharata and Ramayana, such as the battle of Kurukshetra, or the battle of Lanka between Rama's monkeys and the warriors of Ravana. Suryavarman II worshipped Vishnu, and showed by his choice of posthumous name that he wished to be assimilated to that god. It is moreover possible that Angkor Vat was more directly a funeral monument than any temple-mountain before his time. We do not know what idol there was in the central shrine. But various indications, which are particularly numerous from this time onwards, suggest the possibility that a king's ashes may have been deposited in his temple. Besides, Angkor Vat opens towards the west, and that is the region of the dead. The logical order in which to read the stories on the reliefs suggests that pilgrims were intended to keep to the left in going round the temple, and that corresponds perfectly with the ritual of a funeral. Finally, a whole panel is devoted to the last judgement. Mortals are seen ranged before Yama, the Supreme Judge of the Underworld. Then, in accordance with their sins or their merits, they are either plunged into the most terrible torments of hell, or carried off to live in delightful flying palaces surrounded by *Apsaras*. It is therefore a credible idea that Suryavarman II, when he erected so vast a temple disposed in this manner, was particularly anxious to be assimilated to a god. He also built it to satisfy his pride. For there is one whole panel on which we see him first throned amid his innumerable court, and then going forth, riding on an imposing elephant, at the head of his army.

PLATE P. 160

PLATE P. 163

It is not just the wealth and invention of the themes, or their vast extent (for quality is not measured by square yards) which make us place the reliefs of Angkor Vat highest of all. What is unique is the artistry of these frescoes. The latter term is quite appropriate, for there is much more of the painter's brush, than of the sculptors chisel, about them. Clearly the sketches for them were worked out on paper, and we know already that the Khmer did use painting to decorate their shrines. Originally, moreover, touches of gilt and colours would have been used, in the case of the chief figures, for the jewels and for the harness of their

FIG. 26 — *Lintel with floral ornament of Angkor Vat style; first half of the XIIth century.*



mounts. which would have enhanced the illusion that they were frescoes still further. The surface of the stone has hardly been carved away; the figures stand out in relief only about an inch deep, and the trembling leaves of the background must be measured in tenths of an inch. The freedom of the composition is also a natural result of the technique in which it was designed; the perspective is sometimes summary; different grounds are indicated by groups superimposed on one another, or by other primitive means, such as an inclined plane to indicate change of scene. But a sense of space is obtained by half-tones, and by the imponderable variations of brightness and shade on the broken surface of the stone, over which the light seems to glide, but not to rest. By a subtle refinement some details are incised into the background to make a change from moulded relief. Finally, the way the scenes are composed is extremely audacious, especially when one considers the primitive technique of the little scenes from the Baphuon. Here the composition is continuous throughout each panel, and the panels are over fifty yards long on the east and west, and a hundred on the north and south. In practice the visitor himself has to cut it up into successive scenes, as he walks round the gallery. Each scene exactly covers the space one can take in at a given moment by standing as far back as the width of the gallery permits. Each episode is not isolated by the simple device of a frame. The composition is dynamic, unconsciously attracting the eye to the main subject, which may be some personage of great size on his mount, a duel between two

Angkor Vat, Angkor. Eastern part of the southern gallery on the first story. Bas-relief illustrating the Judgement of the Dead: the dead coming before Yama, god of the underworld. Angkor Vat style: first half of the 12th century. *Sandstone; height of the scene 1,60 m.*

heroes in the foreground, or a soldier turning his head back towards his chief. These strong accents give tempo to the rhythm of the majestic recitative, avoiding monotony.

Nowhere in the world are there more beautiful or bolder narrative reliefs. The greatest frescoes of the Italian Renaissance are only to be compared with them. This gives Angkor Vat its title to a place among the wonders of the world.

Sculpture

The sculpture in the round from Angkor Vat, though not without merit, is far from reaching the heights attained by the reliefs, and one must recognise a significant decline since the Baphuon style. It is quite possible that the creators of Angkor Vat intentionally relegated it to second place, when they put so much emphasis on the reliefs. On the other hand we do not possess any major work of this period, and, in particular, no work which we can confidently say was made for the great temple. So, it may be that masterpieces have vanished. What would we think of Baphuon sculpture, if we did not possess the bronze Vishnu from the Mebon or the Siva from Por Loboeuk.

Generally speaking, the statues that we do find are cold and stiff. Their almost square faces with the emphatic arched eyebrows, dry mouths, almost pouting in the case of the women, and their stocky conventionally moulded bodies, do not make seductive statues. All efforts are concentrated on the richness of the dress, more and more complicated in the case of the men, and on the abundance of jewels. We have already talked about them à propos of the *Apsaras* reliefs with the jewelled tiaras from which the headdresses of modern Cambodian dancers derive.

PLATE P. 165

Only a few bronzes rise above the level of this generally rather mechanical work. They prove that a sense of volume and purity of line were not confined to the sculptors of reliefs. They also once more demonstrate the primacy of bronze over sandstone. The astonishing bronze objects, made by the Khmer with such verve and sense of form are well worth studying in detail. There are incense-burners, basins for lustral water, lamp-holders, rings and hooks for litters, and ornaments of chariots. Those few examples which have escaped the melting pot, and are now almost all divided between the museums of Bangkok and Phnom Penh, give us at least some idea of the immensely rich furniture of the temples and palaces of Angkor. If there were more of them and they were better known, Khmer bronzes would certainly take their place immediately after those of China in the field of Asiatic art, for they surpass anything created in India.

The less important monuments

MAP I IN APPENDIX

As if Angkor Vat was not a sufficient monument to his glory, Suryavarman II also erected a series of one-storey buildings which would by themselves give his reign first place in the evolution of Khmer art. Of these the temple of Beng Mealea is the most important. The great king built it 25 miles to the east of Angkor, in memory perhaps of his ancestors,

Hari-Hara, found in the province of Porsat, Cambodia. Angkor Vat style: first half of the 12th century. *Bronze; height 0,29 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

perhaps of his tutor. Most of the themes come from the Vishnu legend, but, curiously enough, there are also Buddhist subjects. Although it appears to have been started at about the same time as Angkor Vat, Beng Mealea, both in its ornament and in its architectural plan, seems to be a little later than the great temple which, in certain respects, it imitates. Though built on one level only, it too has a central shrine surrounded by three concentric galleries. The main approach to the east is by galleries supported on pillars which link the successive entrance-pavilions of the enclosures, so that it is basically a version, though all on ground level, of the plan of Angkor Vat. Thus Beng Mealea is the first of the series of great temples, without terraces, surrounded by galleries and many subsidiary buildings, which were to become so frequent in the next period.

Banteay Samrè, built at the tip of the eastern Baray, is, to judge by its decoration, exactly contemporary with Beng Mealea, and follows the same general plan. Although the main shrine is rather cramped within too small a court, it rivals Angkor Vat in the understanding of form and rhythm of perspectives. It is the masterpiece among temples on one level, just as Angkor Vat is the supreme example of a temple-mountain. Its fine ornament and wonderful storied pediments add further to its charm. Having been restored completely with particular success, Banteay Samrè has become one of the high spots for every pilgrim to Angkor.

PLATE P. 167

Also at Angkor, the two little symmetrical gems of Thommanom and Chau Say Tevoda deserve mention, being built slightly later than Banteay Samrè and Beng Mealea. No doubt they come right at the end of the reign of Suryavarman II. As was to be expected, when the shadows darkened at the end of such a man's life, art suffered an eclipse. One can place in the reigns of his immediate, and mostly insignificant, successors several monuments which, though on a small scale, never fail in accomplishment. There is Preah Pithu T and U, and Preah Palilay, all in the centre of Angkor Thom, and the earliest parts of the Preah Khan of Kompong Svay, to the east of Beng Mealea. In them, significantly, Buddhist themes come gradually into increasing prominence, heralding the great change in Khmer civilisation. The destruction of the city by the Cham was to bring it to a head.

To conclude, the style of Angkor Vat is both the zenith of Khmer civilisation, and the last fling of Hindu art. With it twelve centuries of Indian inspiration came to an end. The unexpected revival under Jayavarman VII was indeed to raise Angkor from its ruins, and he was to build more temples than all his predecessors put together. All these temples were in honour of Buddha, whose calm and peaceful philosophy was already gradually spreading its protecting mantle over the whole of Indianised Indochina. There is no denying that art, in the purest sense of the word, did not outlast the reign of Suryavarman II. Indeed Angkor Vat demonstrated that no further evolution was possible.

Banteay Samrè, Angkor. Western gallery, eastern facade seen towards the north. Angkor Vat style; first half of the 12th century. *Sandstone.*

IX. THE RESURRECTION OF ANGKOR

The capture of Angkor by the Cham marked the end of the Hindu tradition which, till then, had inspired Khmer civilisation. Were it not for Jayavarman VII, it might also have marked the end of Cambodia. This was not simply because invaders had destroyed the city, though it was certainly the first time that enemies had reached the capital. For Cambodia had had the luck to develop in peace, protected from too ambitious neighbours by the sea and vast, almost uninhabited mountain ranges, so that its peace was only disturbed by the internal quarrels of its kings. But the civilisation which had evolved and crystallized at Angkor had reached an impasse. It was unable to renew itself, and could only produce infinite variations on the same themes. Obsessed by the thought of death, the kings had piled up religious foundations one after another, to become in the end the only gods of the Khmer religion. But, in too human a fashion, most unlike gods, they snatched the throne from one another, and embarked on ambitious wars from which they did not always return victorious. In return for the ruinous worship paid to them, which was sucking the country dry, they did not even trouble to increase its wealth by such great public works as had been the glory of earlier reigns. The soil was exhausted, and the artificial lakes and canals were silted up or functioned badly because of lack of attention. In short, from old age and hypertrophy at the head, the system no longer justified the sacrifices demanded from its subjects. The progress of Buddhism, which, to judge from the increasing number of statues of the sage, must have been continuing for more than a century, both marked the breach between rulers and ruled, and aggravated it. It is even more significant that one king of Angkor, Dharanindravarman II, was officially converted. In such circumstances, the victory of the Cham was bound to appear as a divinely ordained catastrophe, and as a sign of the overthrow of the system which had been so extolled, and to which men gave their obedience only because it seemed unshakeable and ordained by the gods themselves. A god is not forgiven for being defeated by men; either men renounce him or, at the very least, cease to believe in him.

PLATE P. 169

JAYAVARMAN VII

Nevertheless one man was to hold back the fatal course of destiny for an instant, by placing the land under the protection of Buddha. He was a fascinating personality, undoubtedly the strongest in the whole of Khmer history, for otherwise he could never have saved Angkor by his sole efforts. But yet, though we know more about him than about anybody else, his complex thoughts remain a puzzle. There is an abundance of monuments and inscriptions, and we even know the man himself.

Buddha in contemplation beneath a *naga*. Found at the Silver Towers, Binh-dinh, Central Vietnam. End of the style of Angkor Vat or first years of that of Bayon: about the third quarter of the 12th century. *Gilt bronze; height 0,455 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

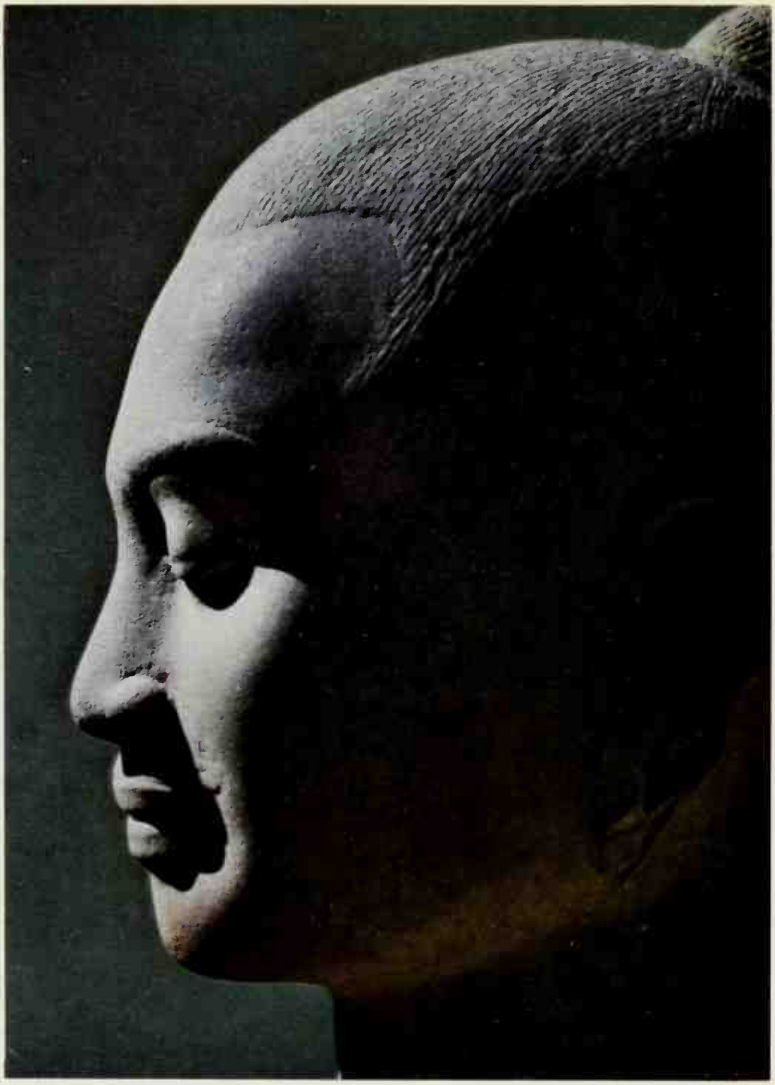
Jayavarman VII placed statues of himself in the chief temples of his kingdom, and several of these have survived. The finest are the wonderful head from the Preah Khan of Kompong Svay, which shows the king at the age of about fifty, and the two statues from Phimai and from the Krol Romeas at Angkor, which seem to portray him when he was ten years older. Comparing these statues, perhaps the work of the same sculptor, we see his strength and determination. Every feature, from the neck to the brow and cheekbones and the tight lips, enhances the same impression. Yet these qualities lie veiled behind the lowered and meditative eyelids. Was it mysticism, or the dissimulation of a policy using religion as a weapon? This is the problem.

PLATE P. 171

Jayavarman was the most arrogant and the most lustful for glory of all the Khmer kings, attributes in which they all excelled themselves. This much is plain from his life and his inscriptions. As already mentioned, he did not succeed his father directly. At the time of his father's death he was leading an army against Champa, and it is surprising that, on his return, he made no move to seize the throne. It is even stranger to note that he did not react when the king was assassinated by a usurper of plebian stock. It would seem that he passed all these years in semi-exile at the Preah Khan of Kompong Svay, some 45 miles east of Angkor. Such passivity fits ill with his character as it subsequently emerged. It required the Cham invasion and the sack of Angkor to bring him forward. After a series of hard fights, in particular a naval battle on the lakes, he chased out the destroyers of Angkor, and in 1181 ascended the throne amid the burnt ruins of the capital. He was then over sixty years old. His vengeance was terrible and pitiless. Having secured the neutrality of Annam he invaded Champa, captured Vijaya, and annexed the country outright. After his victory, Khmer armies, with Cham, Siamese and Burmese contingents, attacked Annam. He extended the boundaries of his empire to the north and to the west, as far as Vientiane, as far as Burma, and as far as the south of the Malayan peninsula. At one moment Indochina seemed united under his sway.

At the same time this man covered his land with Buddhist temples, pious foundations, hostels for pilgrims and hospitals for the sick, and had this admirable inscription carved "The ills that flesh is heir to became in him a spiritual ill all the harder to bear because it is the public sorrow which makes the grief of kings, and not private afflictions". Was he a mystic? His works give ground for such a belief, and from studying his statues, men have thought him one. His conversion to Mahayana Buddhism may have been due partly to his father, and partly to his favourite wives, two sisters who were fervent worshippers of the sage.

However, there are some aspects of the man, in particular the almost frantic restlessness of his activity, which seem curious in a Buddhist, even a Mahayana Buddhist. In the first place, under a somewhat conventional



Head presumed to be Jayavarman VII, found at Preah Khan, Kompong Svay, Cambodia. Beginning of the Bayon style: about 1165—1181? Jayavarman VII reigned from 1181 to 1220. *Sandstone; height 0.41 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

Buddhist disguise, Jayavarman by no means gave up the cult of the king as a god on earth. Apparently he hardly modified at all the Hindu ritual legitimizing the royal house of Angkor. He too, built his mountain-temple, the Bayon, in which, as a concession to the standards of the age, he had himself represented not as Siva or Vishnu but as "Buddha the King". It is well known that the *stupa* is a symbol of the universe as has been proved in the case of Borobudur. Thus the Bayon which has all the features of a *stupa,* might conceivably form the centre of the town. But the temporal rôle of supreme lord, which suits Siva, Indra and Vishnu, is hardly appropriate to the Sage of the Sakyas, free from all earthy cares and all desires.

Furthermore, the fear of death is apparent in every gesture of Jayavarman, to such a degree that it becomes an hallucination. Basically his great foundations are intended to serve the deification of his ancestors, his parents and his servants; but it is legitimate to suppose that he did not forget himself. He dedicated himself to Lokesvara still more than to Buddha, and we have already explained the popularity of the former as an intercessor and even saviour. Again, is this really the behaviour of a Buddhist, and did Jayavarman VII really ameliorate the lot of his people greatly with a few hospitals in exchange for these fantastic buildings? Jayavarman also practically reconstructed Angkor and most of the monuments throughout the land. Where he could not remake the whole, he at least erected a statue or restored some detail. It would be quicker to list the sites that bear no mark of his activity, than to catalogue all his temples and all his restorations. Perhaps in this way, by some sort of magical devotion, he assured the blessing of the gods on all his temples. This is another sign of his mania for survival. There is another possible explanation. In the eyes of the Khmer the Cham victory may have appeared as decisive condemnation of the principle of the monarchy of Angkor. History offers more than one example of a people who, after some particularly violent crisis, actively or passively refuse obedience to a system, though, up to that moment, they had not even conceived that things could be different. Did Jayavarman VII try to save the concept of the god-king, both by allying himself with Buddhism, which was then gaining the support of the masses, and by reconsecrating the earlier temples polluted and desecrated by the Cham, thereby reviving their authority? That also is quite credible.

Or did he contain within himself all these personalities at the same time? Study of his art proves that he was great enough to play all these parts, but it does not enable us to divine his thoughts.

THE STYLE OF THE BAYON

Between 1181 and 1219 (the probable date of his death) Jayavarman shifted greater quantities of stone than all his predecessors put together. Besides restoring ancient temples he started again on his own buildings even before they were finished, constantly modifying and enlarging them.

To introduce some kind of order into this perpetually changing scene, it has been necessary to divide his artistic activity into several phases, and his successive building campaigns can be conveniently considered under the three headings of town planning, symbolism, and style.

The Angkor of Jayavarman VII

By clever, almost dishonest, use of previous work the King completely remodelled Angkor, giving it the aspect we see today. His capital, Angkor Thom, covered up the town which Udayadityavarman II had built round the Baphuon. Jayavarman added an impressive moat, more than ten miles long and more than a hundred yards wide. Furthermore, a strong stone wall protected the city, for the Cham were not forgotten. There were five gates in the circumference; one for each point of the compass, and an extra one, the gate of Victories, on the east side out of respect for the ancient road from the palace to Ta Kèo, which was one of the main axes of the city. These gates were surmounted by towers in the shape of human heads, like those of the Bayon, and leading up to them were roads crossing the moat on embankments and flanked by stone giants. In the centre of Angkor Thom, the King built his mountain-temple, the Bayon. A little further to the north he built his residence, within the enclosure of the royal palace and round Phineanakas; in order to link the raised palace to the original level of the ground, and in particular to the splendid ponds constructed at the end of the tenth century, he built a series of carved terraces. The terrace of the elephants, more than 300 yards long, served as a tribune for the King on the occasion of great parades and festivals, which took place on the open ground reserved for them in front. The central platform commanded a view of the gate of Victories, looking towards Ta Kèo. Further to the north, the terrace of the Leper King may have served as the place where the great of the land were cremated. Finally, on every open piece of ground in Angkor, Jayavarman VII erected still more temples; Banteay Kdei, Ta Prohm, Preah Khan, Neak Pean, Ta Nei, Ta Som, Krol Ko, the chapels of the hospitals and others too numerous to name. He did not entirely forget the welfare of the inhabitants. Apart from the moats of Angkor Thom, he excavated several artificial lakes, such as Sras Srang and the two baray which frame Preah Khan. Finally, he probably adapted the hydraulic system of Angkor, so that it became the most complex and ingenious of all such systems. Not a drop of water was wasted on the way to the lakes; it all went to fertilize the paddy-fields. Few cities in the world can rival Angkor in the field of town planning and landscape art. From each temple towards each point of the compass a triple line – a road with a canal on each side – led to another temple. The city became another Venice, and one may dream of this forest of gilt temples reflected in the waters of canals and lakes.

MAP II IN APPENDIX

PLATE P. 174

PLATE P. 176

Chronology

No doubt it was when he was living at the Preah Khan of Kompong Svay, that is roughly between 1165 and 1180, that Jayavarman VII made

Angkor Thom, Angkor. Southern approach road and gate seen looking north. The road is lined on either side with 54 stone giants holding the *naga* as a symbol of the Churning of the Ocean. Second period of the Bayon style: about 1200. *Laterite and sandstone; length of the road 104 m; height of each giant 2,50 m; height to the summit of the central tower 23 m.*

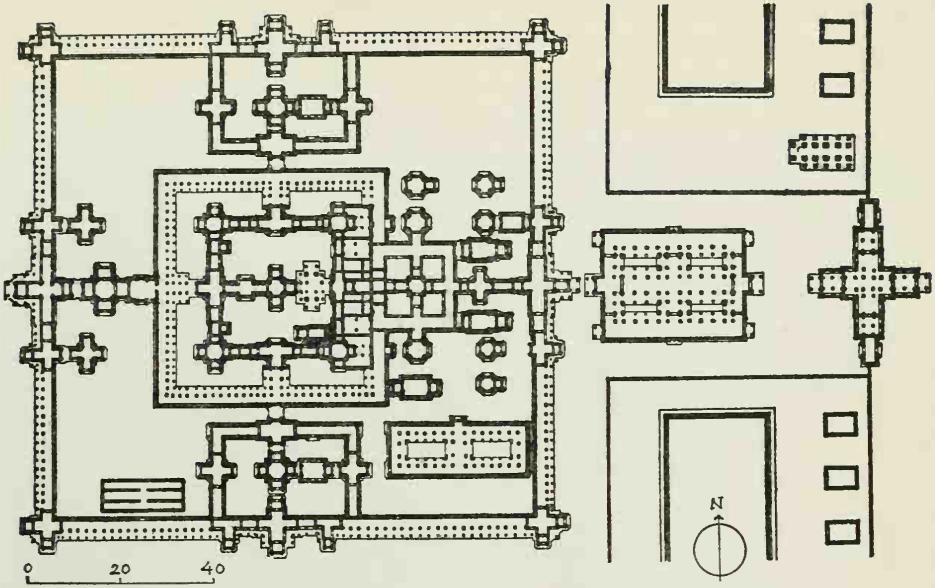


FIG. 27 — *Plan of Ta Prohm, Angkor; founded in 1186 A.D. with alterations up to 1220.*

his first aesthetic experiments. After his arrival at Angkor, he erected successively the great temple monasteries of Banteay Kdei (about 1181), perhaps consecrated to his tutor; Ta Prohm (1186), for his mother deified under the aspect of Prajnaparamita, and Preah Khan (1191), which housed the statue of his father with the attributes of Lokesvara. Finally, to the north west of Angkor he built the impressive temple of Banteay Chmar to the memory of one of his sons killed in battle. It seems that it was towards 1200 that he started to lay out Angkor Thom and to build the Bayon, finishing the royal palace and the terraces towards the end of his life.

PLATE P. 171

FIG. 27

From the aesthetic point of view, the first works of Jayavarman VII spring from the style of Angkor Vat, and his temple monasteries follow the scheme worked out at Beng Mealea of a shrine surrounded by concentric galleries. Of course the iconography is Buddhist, and this led to a repeat of the old styles, on the pediments in particular which are the most interesting works in these monuments. But despite the immensity of his efforts the effects of the destruction of Angkor and the first signs of Khmer decadence are visible everywhere. Any material is used, only too often stone snatched from earlier monuments. The walls are roughly piled up and the task of getting surfaces straight is left to the chisel. The sculpture,

FIG. 28

Bayon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Southern facade. Bayon style; second period: about 1200. Temple-mountain of Jayavarman VII (1181—1200). *Sandstone; height to the summit of the central tower 43 m.*

which is still very beautiful in the early work, especially in the oldest parts of Ta Prohm, becomes increasingly slipshod and fussy. In order to make progress faster, the builders did not shrink from deception: false columns were carved out of the doorposts, and not built out; blind windows were carved out of the flat wall; quality did not matter much, for it was all piecework. All this though scarcely thirty years had passed since the building of Angkor Vat.

In the second period, beginning somewhere about 1195, symbolism began to play an even greater role; no doubt it reflected the development of the King's mysticism. Two of the most beautiful conceptions of Khmer art were invented; towers carved with colossal faces and the avenues of giants symbolising the churning of the ocean. The latter theme appears

at Preah Khan, which was given a new wall surrounded by a moat. A road lined with giants leads across the moat to each of the gates. The same plan was used again at Angkor in about 1200. This is when towers with faces were carved on the gates of the city and the Bayon. In the last phase — the closing years of Jayavarman's life — the royal terraces were constructed, new peripheral galleries were added to all the earlier temples and every square yard of ground available was invaded by chapels and annexes. In the ornament there is more and more concentration on quick ways of working, so that in the end it loses all sculptural quality. After Jayavarman VII, Khmer art was exhausted and simply disappears.

PLATE P. 174

PLATE P. 176

FIG. 27

Symbolism in architecture

Jayavarman VII's most original contribution to Khmer art was this attempt to give symbols material form on a colossal scale. Of course long before his time Khmer temple symbolised the universe centred round Mount Meru by its outline, ornament and lay-out, and did it with some grandeur. Jayavarman VII went beyond this rather subtle symbolism, which was a little esoteric for the ordinary man who, in any case, had not direct access to sanctuaries reserved for the king and his priests. Henceforward the great religious themes were outlined against the sky for all to see. There was no time for refinement; the gods had to be conciliated before the swift arrival of death, a foretaste of which had been provided by the Cham. The Khmer temple before his time had been a material expression of religious beliefs, but obviously, its builders had been equally concerned with beauty of form. Now, however, there was no time to waste over such niceties. If stone was still used, it was because the labour and the immensity of the effort made a better prayer. The architect was only called in to give shape to the brute mass of a prayer in stone. This art was above all a sacred drama enacted before permanent scenery in the theatre of the world, for gods who were turning away from Cambodia and whose attention had to be regained.

The avenues of giants are the most significant examples of this tendency. The themes of the Churning of the Ocean, an allegory of the creations of the world, had always haunted Khmer art. Jayavarman VII gave it

FIG. 28 — *Lintel from the third period of the Bayon style; after 1200 A.D.*

Bayon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Outer southern gallery, axial pavilion and southern staircase of the second story. *Sandstone.*

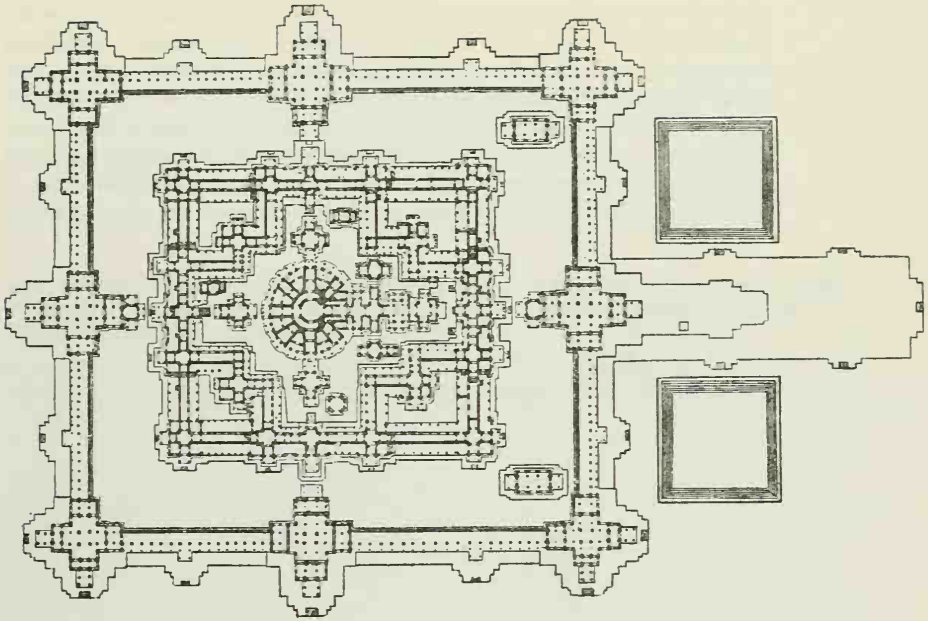


FIG. 29 — *Plan of the Bayon, Angkor.*

incomparably grand expression. For instance, fifty four giants on each side of the avenues at Angkor clasp an immense *naga* (serpent) which stretches majestically from head to tail along the whole length of the avenue. These giants turn their backs to the city, but the pilgrim sees in them to the left the heavenly gods, and to the right the gods of the underworld. Taking the whole city together, with its central temple symbolising the sacred mountain and its four gates symmetrically place at the cardinal points of the compass, this Churning of the Ocean covers some two and a half miles of ground. Thus the heavenly gods at the southern gate hold the tip of a *naga* symbolically twined round the Bayon-mountain and picked up again by the gods of the underworld at the northern gate. Tugging alternatively they make the mountain churn ambrosia from the ocean which is represented by the moats. Considering that the Khmer king, a god on earth, brings wealth and life by the waters of the canals, could any symbol have been better chosen? The inscriptions state the matter quite explicitly: "The city (Angkor Thom) enriched with a palace

of precious stones, was espoused by this king (Jayavarman VII) in order to procreate the happiness of the universe". The image had additional meaning for the Khmer in that the *naga* also stood for the rainbow, and so for the bridge to heaven. And, by passing along these avenues, did one not reach the Bayon, image of the celestial palace of the gods? The beauty of the composition is worthy of the grandeur of the conception: the rhythm of the bodies straining backwards, the vast bulk of the serpent rearing towards the sky, and the impressive eyes of the giants, which

Bayon, Angkor Thom; Angkor. North part of the inner western gallery. Bas-relief of the Churning of the Ocean by the Gods and Demons. Last period of the Bayon style: after 1200. *Sandstone; height of the carved panel 1,37 m.*

seem to pierce the pilgrim's heart, all make this one of the most moving creations of Khmer art.

Another equally significant example of this symbolism is the little temple of Neak Pean, one of the subsidiary shrines of Preah Khan, built on an island in the middle of an artificial lake. This tower-sanctuary, representing paradise floating on the primaeval ocean, rises on circular foundations in the middle of a square basin. Water from the main basin flows down to four smaller tanks round from fountains in little shrines. It is the

MAP II IN APPENDIX

Bayon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Outside eastern gallery, north panel. Bas-relief showing the Khmer army and its allies starting out for war against Champa Second period of the Bayon style: about 1200. *Sandstone; height of the scene 1,20 m.*

symbol of a miraculous lake in the Himalayas where all illnesses were cured. Thus the king enabled his subjects to come to the capital and be cured of all their sicknesses in a magic replica of the holy place which the Indians themselves had only vaguely imagined. He carried this reconstruction of sacred geography even further. Lake Anavatapta is also regarded as giving life to the four great rivers of the world, among them the Ganges. The waters of Neak Pean, judiciously redistributed by canals, flowed towards the four points of the compass and there transformed the rivers and liquid arteries of Angkor into as many magic streams, in which anyone who so desired could wash away his sins. Then, in his frantic longing for salvation, Jayavarman added, above the water of the central pool, a colossal piece of statuary representing Avalokitersvara transformed into a white horse in order to snatch ship-wrecked merchants from a fearful death. The great courser bounds over the Ocean of Torments with the men clinging to him, just as the king tried to snatch his people from death with a superhuman effort.

The terrace of the Leper King is another concrete symbol of a great religious myth. It comprises two series of reliefs on walls built one behind the other. The latter of these completely masked the former, which has only come to light during the restoration work at Angkor. Was it a case of second thoughts? More probably it was symbolic. The reliefs on the inner wall seem to represent the Gods of the underworld lying in wait under the earth, while those on the outer wall depict the heavenly and favourable divinities, the only ones visible. This may have been a salutary lesson to the faithful; the hidden menace of death was also allowed to hover over them.

The Bayon

The most astounding of all Jayavarman VII's works is the Bayon, which in spite of its terrible clumsiness, is nevertheless the finest example of his architectural symbolism. The king probably used an earlier temple to serve for his foundations, but we know nothing of it as it was entirely covered over by the temple mountain marking the centre of Angkor Thom. Although the whole of it dates from the last phase of the style of Jayavarman VII, the Bayon has been so often and capriciously altered and enlarged that it makes a real architectural puzzle. The original

FIG. 29

scheme consisted of a vaulted gallery in the shape of a Greek cross. Then the angles were blocked by other galleries to turn it into a rectangle of 90 x 64 yards, surrounded by a further external gallery of 180 x 159 yards. An impressive platform was constructed in the middle of the inner gallery to support the main shrine which was circular in plan with a central chapel and twelve subsidiary chapels radiating out from it. The holy of holies, the chapels, the pavilions, of the inner gallery were all topped with towers, fifty-four in all, an absolute forest of stone rising in giddy confusion to a height of nearly one hundred and forty feet above the ground.

Four colossal heads are carved on each of the towers, facing the cardinal points of the compass. In the central shrine sat enthroned the Buddha meditating beneath a naga, the King of the Universe with whom Jayavarman identified himself. The chapels all round held idols of the great dignitaries of the realm, who were thus associated with their monarch's deification. These heads "looking every way at once" are admirable symbols of the omnipresence of the King and god, watching over the land assembled at his feet in the persons of the chief local dignitaries. This sense of his ubiquitous presence was further re-inforced by portrait statues of Jayavarman in all the principal temples of the land. It is the most extraordinary material expression of the concept of the god-king, which is known to us. PLATE P. 176

Another attractive idea adds fresh splendour to all this symbolism. Buddhist legends tell us that at the great miracle of Sravasti, the Sage, in order to confound impudent magicians, rose and multiplied himself ten thousand times in the air into as many buddhas sparkling with flames and turning like a crown of stars. It is difficult to see how this episode could be represented architecturally other than by the use of a pivot, yet the Bayon succeeds in doing it. When the visitor emerges on the central terrace and finds himself encircled by these innumerable faces with their staring expressions lit and then left in shadow one after the other by the changing light, he no longer knows whether he himself is moving or the Bayon turning round him. By this trick of illuminating simultaneously from every angle an infinite repetition of the same theme, the architecture has created the most subtle and effortless of transpositions. To appreciate the Bayon one must therefore understand it, for apart from its halo of faces, it must be admitted that it is an architectural monstrosity. The only reservation that should be made is perhaps that the outside gallery built on the same principle as that of Angkor Vat, with one side on pillars to illuminate the interior reliefs, does sometimes offer a splendid view of the central block. PLATE P. 178

Reliefs

Profiting by the experience of Angkor Vat, Jayavarman VII lavishly used great sculptured frescoes to make his temples speak more clearly. He decorated the terraces of his palace with them but especially the Bayon, in which there are two whole galleries devoted to stories carved in relief. Only some panels of the inner gallery and essentials of the outer gallery can be attributed to his actual reign. The rest are either unfinished or were executed later. In any case, they possess only historical interest.

Although the bas-reliefs of Jayavarman VII on the Bayon appear to have been hastily executed, they are too often praised, even preferred to those of Angkor Vat. It is sufficient however, to compare the treatment of an identical theme in the two temples, for example the Churning of the Ocean. The Bayon treatment is one of the best panels in the interior galleries; but how far we are from the sublime art of Suryavarman II. PLATE P. 180

Terrace of the elephants, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Unidentified figure from the north panel of the northern stairway in its second form. End of the Bayon style: after 1200. *Sandstone; height of the figure 0,56 m.*

On the other hand there are hundreds of charming features, naïve or roguish details and a freshness and poetry which can only spring from complete freedom. For the first time Khmer sculptors could let their fancy control their chisels, working in the same spirit as at the Baphuon, but with the chance to add scenes of daily life. For while the main outline of the theme, which was the King's life, was dictated, the lesser details were not laid down in advance, as they clearly were at Angkor Vat. The result is a sort of popular epic, like the *Odyssey* before it was written down in impeccable verse.

Historic scenes, such as the expeditions of Jayavarman and his allies against Champa, are enlivened by anecdotes of everyday life: of squabbling among the wagon-drivers and camp followers, of a boy stealing fruit from a market-woman's stall and of Khmer and Chinese betting on a cockfight. One sees the guards in the royal palace amusing themselves by fencing, or by setting wild boars to fight. Then again one sees a hunter in the forest, or the love dance of herons. The analogy with cathedral sculptures springs to mind; here, as there, we have the expression of a faith; and it is by this intensity of life that the Bayon reliefs win the day. It is wrong however, to compare them with the supposed coldness of those of Angkor Vat, and even more so to see in them a "liberation" of the artist. PLATE P. 181

Jayavarman wished to associate all his people with what he was doing, so he opened the gates and walls of his temple. But the Khmer sculptors had long been capable of carving in a picturesque or naturalistic way. We saw that at the Baphuon, and it is still more evident at Angkor Vat, whatever people may have said, in the realistic details of heaven and hell and the sentimental details on the corner towers. The only difference is that until now the artist had been in the service of a purely royal religion. To a certain extent, in intention the style of the Bayon reveals a secular style, which must in any case have existed in the decoration of private dwellings before it entered the holy of holies.

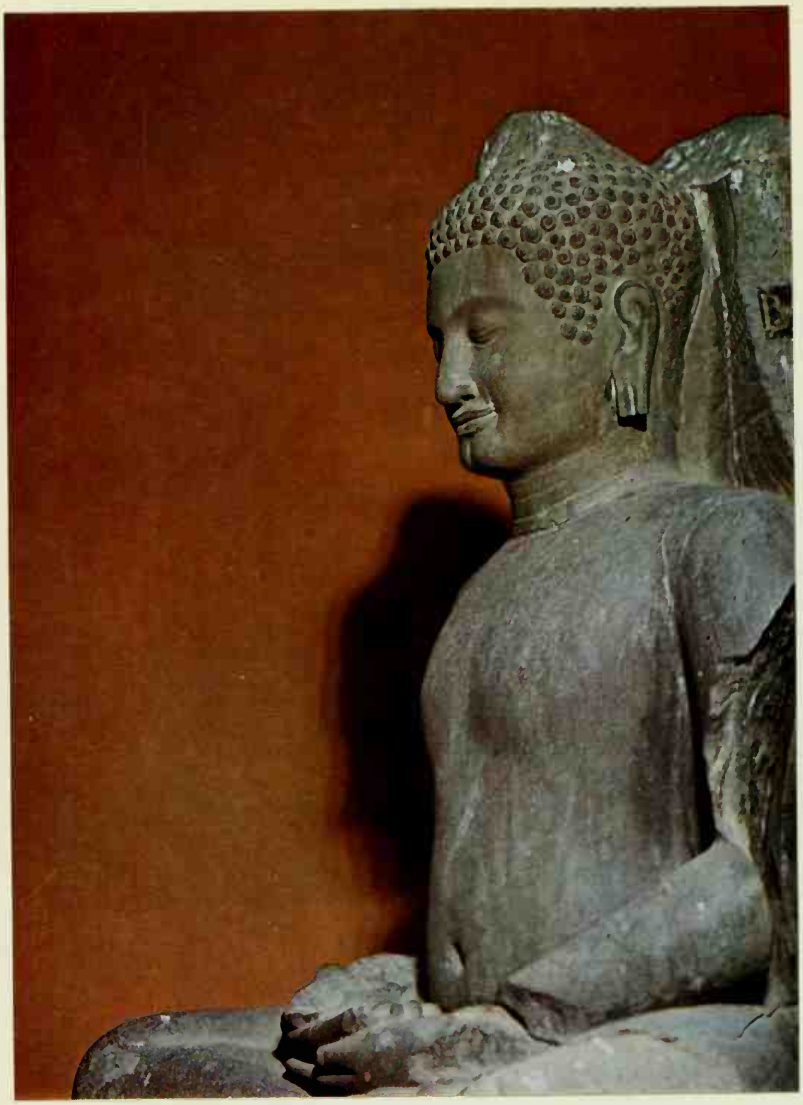
If Khmer art had survived, would the Bayon experiments have finally led to a new aesthetic? There are certainly some remarkable attempts at naturalism. On one panel, instead of superimposed planes, to indicate perspective, there is an oblique bird's eye view of chains of mountains and a river, so as to connect the successive episodes in the narrative. This is on the way to the development of true aerial perspective, perhaps under the influence of the Chinese who had long been familiar with it. Finally there are some pieces of carving which show that the genius of earlier generations lived on. The inside reliefs on the northern stairway of the Terrace of the Elephants are excellent, both the lively modelling and the felicitous composition leaving nothing to be desired. Had Khmer artists not been forced to work on vast projects, once the Cham invasion was over, they might well have attained a new perfection. Sculptors too were feverishly active in Jayavarman VII's reign peopling PLATE P. 184

Hevajra, a Mahayana Buddhist divinity. Royal palace of Angkor Thom, Angkor; ruins of the palace of Jayavarman VII (between 1181 and 1220?). Probably the end of the Bayon style: about 1200. *Gilt bronze; height 0,22 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

these vast stone labyrinths. There were innumerable votive statues of the god-king, and also of those near to him, for he extended this privilege to his family, his servants and soon to his whole people, whom he gathered round him in the Bayon as though in a pantheon. Most of these statues were cast in bronze, which made the work quicker, and, when gilded, gave the illusion of gold. There are some, Buddhas on *naga,* for example, PLATE P. 169 which are beautifully made and close to the style of Angkor Vat. Even in a later phase in this style, the Khmer artists showed that they could be creative, particularly when they had to portray the figures of the Mahayana, which were new to them. The figure of Hevajra, Buddhist PLATE P. 186 counterpart of the dancing Siva, thus made a successful entrance into the Khmer repertoire.

In general, one of the most striking characteristics of the Bayon art is the expansion of the iconography. Buddha on a *naga* is an increasingly popular subject; a striking example is the great statue found at the bottom of the axial well underneath the central shrine of the Bayon. At the same time the artists draw on the repertoire of the Dvaravati school, which seemed at the time a sort of repository of orthodox Buddhist art. For example, the standing Buddha holding his arms outstretched before him, a type whose development in Siam has been discussed, now occurs frequently in Cambodia. It was to be predominant in the next century, a last echo of the Angkor tradition preserved in the iconography of Hinayana Buddhism. As for sculpture in stone, it is still more uneven. The quarries had probably been worked out. Sculptors had to make do with poor quality stone and were forced to give their figures enormous legs to prevent them collapsing. But if the technique declined, the coldness of Angkor Vat yields to the breath of life. The reason for these experiments was undoubtedly the obsession with apotheosis; there was no better way to render this effective than to make the statues real portraits. In certain cases the result was a splendid expression of mystical yet smiling meditation; for example, the great Lokesvara of Preah Khan, who is probably Jayavarman's father. Finally there are the statues of the king himself, which we have already mentioned. They are unequalled not only in PLATE P. 171 Cambodia, but in the whole of Asia, and form a worthy tribute to a man who remains quite unique.

This brief recapitulation leaves one gasping and confused. It hardly seems credible that a single man could have inspired so many undertakings, each vaster than the last. One cannot see what there was left to do, or to think, after him. Angkor Vat, in the person of an incomparably majestic sovereign, had marked the zenith of Hindu civilisation as adapted by the Khmer. The Bayon was the apotheosis of a moribund civilisation, brought about by the proud will of one man. If Jayavarman VII finally sucked his country dry, yet his shadow, much larger than life, will forever haunt the twilight of Angkor.



Buddha in contemplation protected by the *naga*. Found at the Bayon, Angkor Thom, Angkor. Khmer art; post-Bayon style: second half of the 13th century. *Sandstone; height 0,93 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh*

X. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE INDIANISED STATES

THE DEATH OF ANGKOR

After Jayavarman VII and the Bayon, there is no king and no temple at Angkor deserving mention, although the daily life of the town continued without apparent change. The well known Chinese traveller, Chou Ta-kuan, who visited it in 1295, still describes the city as the richest, and the king as the most powerful in the Southern Seas. Until 1430, when they left, Khmer kings still reigned at Angkor, learned Brahmins continued to argue in Sanscrit, and young and ambitious Thai princes took it as their model, while waiting to conquer it by rougher methods.

It was all no more than the automatic activity of ghosts. Despite the heroic strivings of Jayavarman VII, after his time the concept of the god-king, even in Buddhist dress, is dead. Not one temple-mountain, not one royal foundation, was erected after 1200. The worship of Siva continued at the court of Cambodia which, was one of its last refuges like Bali after Islam had spread over Java. Even Brahmins from India were drawn thither by its splendid reputation. But the break was complete between these Hindu survivals and the Cambodian people, who had rallied to Hinayana Buddhism or, to be more exact, Theravada, the Sinhalese Buddhist tradition which thenceforth triumphed in south eastern Asia. The whole system of Angkor depended on mutual relations between king and people so that, once faith was lost, the system could not survive. Though they certainly had the material means at command, the reason why the last kings of Angkor erected no monument consecrating their power as god-king was that no one, beginning with themselves, believed in their divinity any longer. They did not even dare to consecrate a temple to their post-humous worship. Moreover they themselves increasingly frequently joined the Buddhist ranks. This is proved by the disappearance of Sanscrit in the inscriptions, to be replaced by Pali, the language of Theravada Buddhism. The last Sanscrit inscription from Angkor dates from 1327, and the first in Pali from 1309. Between these two dates the fate of Hindu religion was sealed.

Meanwhile the economic state of the country declined dangerously. Such an irrigation system as that of Angkor requires constant development and maintenance, without which it will get clogged and break down. Only the central power, sustained by belief in a god-king, could keep the gigantic network in order, and when that grew weak, the land went to ruin. For a time men survived by cultivating the land without irrigation. But production was reduced by two thirds, and was certainly not enough to support densely populated Angkor. A fall in population followed

automatically, and would certainly have taken place even without bloody wars, and the mass deportations enforced by the Thai. Worse was to follow. The soil, no longer annually refreshed by the loam brought down by the irrigating waters, but still cultivated intensively, became irremediably impoverished. The terrible anopheles mosquito, which had not been able to live in flowing water, multiplied on the stagnant lakes and canals. It is reasonable to suppose that endemic malaria still further hastened the decline of Angkor, for even now it is one of the most malarial districts in Cambodia. Angkor, built in a desert by the strength of human effort, returned to desert when that energy failed, and the forest again covered what had been the best cultivated land in Indochina.

This process could not be reversed. For the Khmer, in exploiting the land by an immensely skilful but purely artificial system, had hopelessly exhausted it. A map showing the temples and the irrigation system of Angkor, exactly corresponds with a map of the desert areas of modern Cambodia. To survive the Cambodians had to retreat to the central and southern provinces of their land, where the Mekong still flowed. They were thus reoccupying the former lands of Chen-la and Fu-nan, which had never been exploited by the same system as Angkor. The map of pre-Angkor sites corresponds exactly with the area now inhabited. The civilisation of Angkor had succeeded in the miracle of exploiting the richest, but most difficult, zones intensively. After, as before, Angkor, society had to turn back to a meagre subsistence economy. Naturally enough it crumbled socially and politically, a strange and fascinating reversion of history.

The final destruction of Angkor was precipitated by the devastating attacks of the Thai. Ramadhipati, the founder of Ayuthya, captured the town in 1353, carried off its wealth, including even the royal ballet, burnt it, and put one of his sons on the throne. The Cambodians regained their liberty, but Ramesuen again overran the country in 1385. The Cambodian kings once more reasserted themselves, and fortified the royal palace and the enclosure of the Baphuon, which they surrounded by a strong earth rampart, making it a last place of heroic resistance in the heart of the ancient city. But it was in vain. In 1431 Paramaraja II of Siam captured and burnt what remained of the city. Then the Cambodians left Angkor, and retreated to the east of Cambodia, abandonning to the forest the vast stone skeletons, from which the soul had fled two centuries and a half before.

Survivals of the art of Angkor

We have already explained why no monument conforming to the ancient conceptions of Angkor was erected after 1220. The later reliefs at the Bayon and Mangalartha, a tiny sanctuary dedicated to one of the favourite Brahmins of the kings in 1295, do not deserve the name of works of art. For art was the first manifestation of the civilisation of Angkor to disappear, if we are talking of art as the expression of the royal Hindu

conception of the universe. But the sculptural tradition evolved at Angkor did not likewise disappear, for it was adapted to the service of the new religion, Theravada Buddhism. Unluckily we know hardly anything about how this happened, for the use of stone was given up at the same time, and the wooden buildings erected from the 13th century onwards, have not survived the repeated sacks of the town, and, in any case, the climate would not have spared them. All that survives is some anonymous terraces on which there must have been shrines housing statues, and a very few sandstone figures of Buddha which have not yet been properly studied. This gap in our knowledge is the more regrettable, as it would have been fascinating to see how technique was adapted to express a new concept of society.

What few remains we have, are enough to show that the iconographic types, inspired by the art of Dvaravati, which had come in during the time of the Bayon style, were then predominant. The most typical is that of Buddha mediating beneath a *naga* of which there are several very beautiful examples which can be roughly dated to the second half of the 13th century. The characteristic features of the Bayon style are now more strongly stressed. Thus the hair is treated as little curls arranged in a quincunx; the nose is aquiline; eyes are lowered, with a sinuous line for the eyelids; and there is the enigmatic smile. The beginnings of Cambodian Buddhist art reach a remarkably high standard. Unluckily wood came more and more into fashion, even for statues and we begin to plunge into the obscurity of centuries without inscriptions and without monuments.

PLATE P. 188

CAMBODIA AFTER ANGKOR

The Cambodian kings finally abandoned a region ruined both by their ancestors' magnificence and by the Thai invasions, retreating to the four branches of the Mekong which was the geographical centre of their land. This saved them. The Thai were not yet strong enough to chase them beyond the desert of their own creation, when they smashed up all that the Khmer had organised, from Phimai to Angkor. Champa still held out, and the Vietnamese had not yet got a foothold in Cochin China. It was not till three centuries later that the two conquering peoples from the north realised the ultimate bond between them. This gave the Cambodians their last reprieve.

MAP I IN APPENDIX

Cambodian kings established themselves first at Phnom Penh (founded in 1434) and then at Srei Santhor where they reigned until 1505. One should not suppose that they immediately lost their strength or their energy. A king such as Ang Chan (about 1505 to about 1556), who established his court at Lovêk was able to recapture the region of Angkor and even the tableland of Korat from the Siamese. His son Barom Reachea I (1556 to 1576) was even able to rule for some time from Angkor. He restored Angkor Vat, and may have finished some of the panels of the reliefs which had remained uncarved since the temple was

built. It was to his court that the first Europeans, Portuguese Franciscans, came and recorded their astonishment at seeing that temple and Angkor Thom. But the Siamese, profiting by what they had learnt from the Khmer, continually prospered and spread their power. They destroyed Lovêk in 1593. The Cambodian kings, who reigned from that time onwards from Oudong, were no more than their vassals until, at the beginning of the 19th century, Siam practically dominated Indochina to the west of the Mekong.

Though geographically the Khmer people were thus herded together, socially they were disintegrated. Seven centuries of centralisation at Angkor had shaped and moulded them into the most homogeneous nation in Asia. Language, writing, law, social and administrative organisation, and religion had all been strictly brought into line. Under the monarchy of Angkor, there was nothing but the god-king surrounded by his priests, and the people. The court had gone, the king was no longer a god, and very little of a king. Only the people remained, no longer held tight by a unified socialist economy, but left to itself. Each individual subsisted on a plot of land which he cultivated himself, without the help of others and with no interference from the state. There was, moreover, so much empty ground in the depopulated land, that, when one place was exhausted it was easy to move elsewhere. At the time of Angkor there had been no private property, and now there was no more reason for it. Even today a Cambodian village will move for the slightest of reasons and land belongs to the man who cultivates it.

Buddhism prevailed everywhere. In the people's eyes the Buddha was no more than a new god to whom one prayed for rain. He was not the protector of a king representing him on earth, and was therefore in no way identified with a political or social system. The monks, whose numbers were continually increasing, [illegible]ngly tolerated what was, from a strictly orthodox point of view, idolatry, because their living depended on it. Their vocation cut them off from any interest in a worldly order from which they had sought to flee, when they took the cowl. The king became no more than one of the faithful in the pagoda at the capital, and was no longer the head of a clerical body holding under him all knowledge and all power. The village pagoda was the only cell of civilisation and the only element of organisation remaining in this total void. All those who passed some months or years wearing the yellow robe, learnt to read and write, and learnt to work in wood well enough to erect the best shrine they could for the statue of Gautama. Art sought asylum at that shrine, but art too was reduced to the scale of individual effort, and the plastic tradition common to all since the time of Angkor, was the sole unifying element. The land dozed in smiling renunciation.

Cambodian Buddhist art

Though it did not stray beyond the pagoda, the quality of Cambodian Buddhist art is exceptional, for the least of its subjects had been impreg-

Buddha bearing witness to his fearlessness. Found at Angkor Vat, Angkor. Cambodian art; perhaps of the 15th century. *Gilt and coloured wood; height of the face 0,37 m. Depot for the Preservation of Angkor.*

nated with the powerful genius of Angkor. Down to the beginning of the 20th century the Cambodian artisan could make the simplest object, a sickle or a spoon for rice, into a thing of beauty. In that respect at least, the country gained a heritage justifying the excesses of Angkor.

Unluckily we possess hardly any objects from the period between the 15th and 18th centuries, for only wood was used, and that has not resisted the climate and the insects.

We have nothing but some Buddhist statues found at Angkor Vat which, after its temporary reoccupation by the kings in the 16th century, became a Theravada Buddhist monastery known throughout Indochina, and to which pilgrims came from afar. They are mostly standing Buddhas with their hands lifted in front of the breast, in accordance with the Dvaravati type apparently in fashion then. The beauty of some of them is moving and owes something to the refinement of carving in wood. All emphasis on anatomy has vanished to stress a purity of line of the utmost simplicity. Even the clothes are fused with the body, leaving only the face and hands to carry their message. Possibly the most beautiful exam-

PLATE P. 193

ples may date back to the 15th century. They must be the last echoes of that happy vein. Slowly the fashion turned to Buddhas in the same stance, but loaded with heavy jewels and clothes with delicate arabesques, heightened by gilt and fragments of mirrors. This "jewelled Buddha" type is not without plastic quality, and the glow of gold on gold and precious stones puts one in mind of Byzantine icons. An exceptional piece, also found at Angkor Vat, is proved by the details of the dress to belong to this class, and may date back to the 16th century. It is probably a votive statue, and reprents a man worshipping Buddha, a type which derives from the praying figures at Angkor, and perhaps earlier in Khmer art. The features and the gesture of the hands are both of exquisite

PLATE P. 195

gentleness, a perfect expression of the Buddhism of renunciation which at that time permeated Cambodia.

These few examples are enough to show that Cambodian art had not fallen back since Angkor, but remained the most vigorous and the most profound in the peninsula. Thai art has been much written up and described as the heir of Angkor. Comparison between the two pieces here illustrated and the finest Thai Buddha, is enough to put such a pretension in perspective, and show that only our ignorance of Cambodian works makes such a claim possible. The only merit of the Thai pieces is that they are more numerous, being made of bronze which lasts better. They should, however, be put back in their proper place, that of prolific *bondieuserie*. Unfortunately Siam triumphed politically, and from the 17th century onwards the plastic conventions followed in the train, infiltrating first and then imposing themselves in the Cambodian pagodas. Khmer art never recovered from this last assault.

CHAMPA

We have seen that from 1128 Suryavarman II dominated Champa. Under

Worshipper before Buddha. Found at Angkor Vat, Angkor. Probably a votive statue. Cambodian art: perhaps of the 16th century. *Gilt and incrusted wood; height 0.92 m. National Museum, Phnom Penh.*

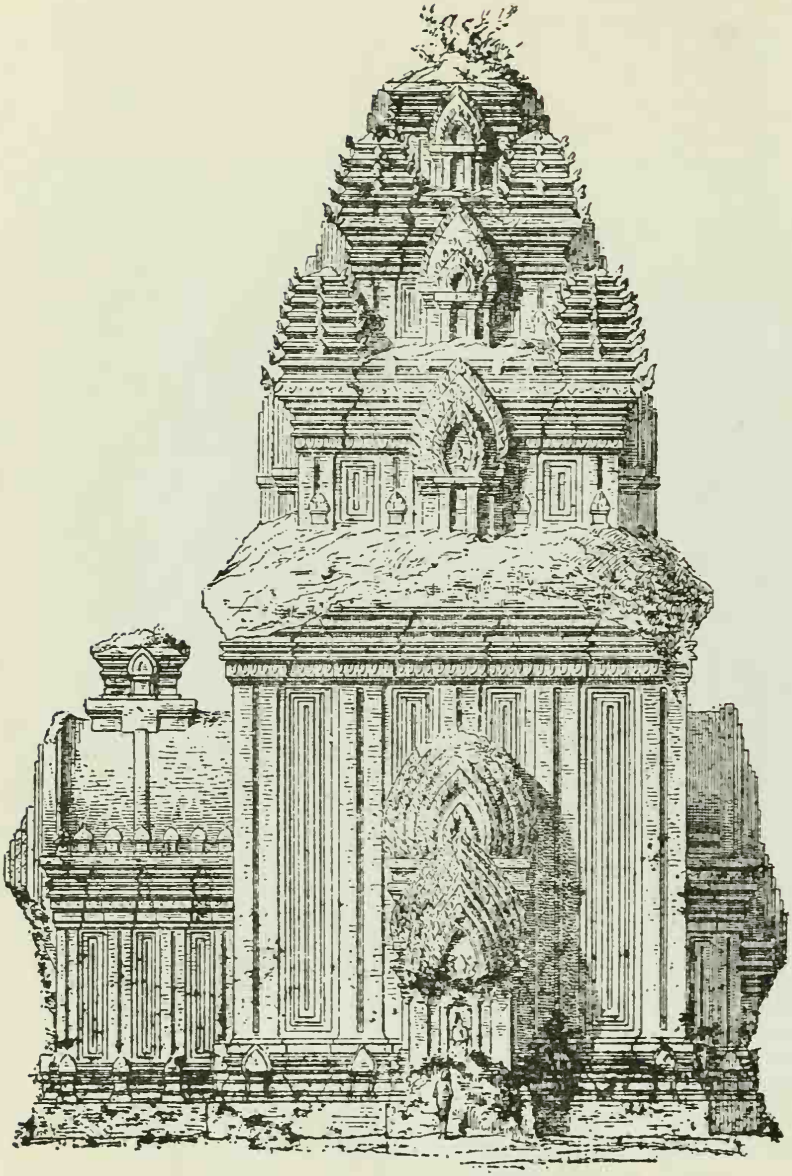


FIG. 30 — *Northern facade of the main tower of the group of Silver Towers, Binh-dinh, Central Vietnam. Cham art; style of Binh-dinh; beginning of the XIIth century.*

king Jaya Harivarman I (1147 to 1166) this country regained its independence, and foundations at Mi-son and at the Po Nagar of Nha-trang bear witness to a revival inspired by Angkor Vat. Under Jaya Indravarman (1167 to 1190), the Cham were even able to burn Angkor in 1177. The counterstroke came with Jayavarman VII who dominated Champa down to 1220. Unluckely this "Hundred years war" which can be called fratricidal strife between two Indianised states,weakened them both, while their mortal enemies, the Thai and the Vietnamese, sharpened their arms in peace. Being less powerful, in the direct line of their enemies' attack, and subject to assimilation by direct colonisation, the Cham did not have the luck to survive like Cambodia, but simply and completely disappeared. From 1225, under the Tran dynasty, the Vietnamese again took the offensive. In 1283 a new adversary, the Mongols of Kublai Khan, ravaged the Cham coast because they had been refused homage. It was then that Marco Polo heard of the distant kingdom, by whose shore he passed on his return journey in 1285. Nevertheless the Vietnamese pressed their inexorable drive towards the south. By 1306 they were masters of all the land to the north of the Col of Clouds. From 1313 they only allowed puppets on the throne of Vijaya. Che Bong Nga (1360 to 1390) alone resisted for a time, relying on the Ming dynasty which had just come to power and was threatening Vietnam. He even succeeded in plundering Hanoi. But his successors could not even protect their own territory. In 1471 Vijaya was captured, and Champa ceased to exist as a nation. A few centres already converted to Islam, to the south of Cape Varella carried on a quiet existence, until the Vietnamese came down past that point, and extinguished the very name of Champa.

The Binh-dinh style

After the long period of transition following the Mi-son A 1 style, a period which corresponds with the weakening of the Cham kings eclipsed by Angkor, a very characteristic style took shape in the first years of the 12th century. There is enough evidence to prove that it was due to the influence of Angkor Vat. Hung-thanh and Mi-son G 1 are typical of the first phase of this development, which must have occurred during the reigns of Harivarman V (1113 to 1139) and Jaya Harivarman I (1147 to 1166) who were particularly active at Mi-son. After the subtle refinement of line at Mi-son A 1, Cham towers become progressively impoverished, and end up as characterless cubic blocks. At the Silver Towers the multiple curves of the false arches are shaped like the point of a lance. At Hung-thanh the false storeys of the top are both multiplied and diminished to form a continuous curve, imitating the ogival silhouette of the towers of Angkor Vat. This evolution continues at Thap-mam and with the Ivory Towers which probably date from the first years of the 13th century, for there are lintels there copied from those of the end of the Bayon style. Thua-thien, the Copper Towers and the Golden Towers (Binh-dinh) dating from the middle and the end of the 13th century,

FIG. 30

MAP I IN APPENDIX

carry this development even further. Above the main false arches, subsidiary arches have been added, simulating false storeys on the body of the tower. At the top, the miniature copies of the building ornamenting the cornices have been enlarged out of all proportion, especially in their upper parts, so that they look like a fantastic crop of huge mushrooms. The angle motifs are so stylised that they just become crochets of stone fastened on to the tower. The walls are generally divided up by five pilasters, and the mouldings between are elaborated. The garlands under the cornice disappear, and are often replaced by a frieze of animals. The prevailing decorative element is that called the "Thap-mam motif", and looks like a snail shell prolonged by a crochet, the last stage in the stylisation of foliage. There is also a very characteristic ornament, the frieze of "women's breasts", which is really a stylisation, carried to the length of deformation, of lotus buds.

The sculpture of this period, of which a lot has been found at Thap-mam, is woefully inferior to the Tra-kieu pedestal, and a vague half-hearted imitation of Khmer art does not save it. Just a few reliefs, such as
PLATE P. 201 those of the Silver Tower, have a seductive, tranquil grace and harmony. But for the most part the profusion of repetitive jewels and the desiccated ornament are not of the happiest. The faces can be recognised by the horizontal line beneath the eyes, the dry mouths and the broad raised eyebrows. The headdress is generally some sort of a tiara with many storeys. The hem and overhanging fold of the garments often reflect Khmer models. The fantastic animals found at Thap-mam do have movement and a certain sense of grandeur.

The final stages of Cham art

From the 14th century, the time of the break up of the country, Cham art fell into a fatal decline. Mi-son was in the hands of the Vietnamese, and the last temples are all concentrated in the south. Po Klaung Garai, perhaps dating from the last years of the 13th century, already shows
FIG. 31 the Binh-dinh style in decay. The southern tower of the Po Nagar at Nha-trang, Yang Prong, Yang Mum, and finally Po Romé, which is traditionally dated as the 17th century and is certainly the last Cham building, mark the stages of this disintegration. Whereas most art goes to ruin from excess of ornament and versatility, the art of the Cham, in sad reflection of the fate of the land, died from lack of ideas and from exhaustion. The tower sanctuaries show this trend most clearly, stressing some characteristics to the point of absurdity, and ending up as a pile of incoherent and incomprehensible elements. From Po Klaung
FIG. 31 Garai, with its very large portal and the silhouette of the tower still reflecting Khmer models, to Po Romé the full course is run. This later monument consists of nothing but four brick cubes piled on top of one another, bristling with great protruding stones which are the final degeneration of the miniature buildings decorating the cornice, and tiny clumsy niches placed on the facade. There is no point in analysing further

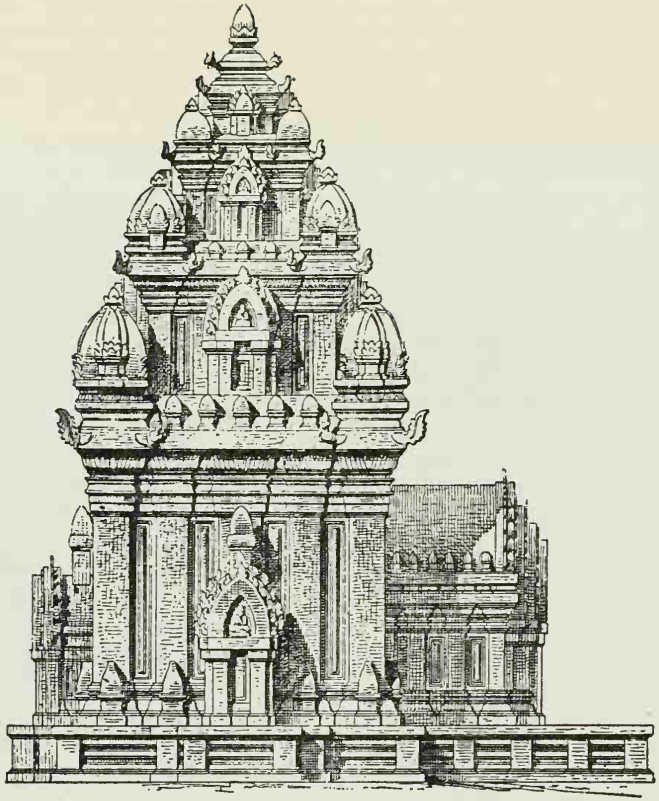


FIG. 31 — *Souther Facade of the sanctuary of Po Klaung Garai, Binh-dinh, Central Vietnam. Cham art; style of Binh-dinh; end of the XIIIth century.*

these typical elements, which we have chosen in order to provide a guiding line. Moreover they almost all disappeared, as did the pilasters, the panel decoration on the walls, garlands and little columns. The ones that survived have become so figurative that no sign of their original function or sculptural intention is left. This is the fatal result of mechanical repetition, technical inadequacy, and the complete absence of invention.

In the sculpture, however, there is one curious phenomenon. The arms and legs of the statues are all contained in a single geometric block, from which only the trunk and the face above it emerge. Ultimately there

is only a panel, in the shape of a stele, with a headdress and face carved on it, and even this is finally reduced to a pattern vaguely suggesting a tiara with two cloudy wisps standing for the eyes. So the whole thing has come back full circle to the stele and the worked stone from which sculpture was born fifteen hundred years before.

Unlike the art of Angkor which could pass its experience on to Cambodian Buddhist sculpture, Cham art never had the chance to attach itself to some new idea, and flourish once more, even modestly. The Vietnamese were already dried up and fixed in their narrow conventions, so that they learnt nothing, and kept nothing. The Thai at least had the sense to go to school at Angkor. Cham art was just left to die on its own. In that respect, it is a rare and interesting occurrence in the history of art. Something was saved however because the last Cham kings, fleeing from the Vietnamese, took refuge with their poor mountain cousins, the Jarai and Rhadé of the highlands of Indochina. Down to our own days these people have jealously guarded in specially constructed huts the "treasures" of the Cham kings, a miscellaneous collection of silver, Vietnamese clothes and rare Cham jewels, pathetic relics of the past. When the arts of these primitive peoples come to be studied, the models they had before their eyes must not be forgotten.

The last reflection of Hindu thought disappeared from Indochina with the Cham. When tracing the impressive progress of Indian expansion, first place is always given to Buddhism. That it did play an essential part, and that it alone survived to our day, is clear. But was it preponderant at the start, and was it really the motive force behind the progress of these peoples? Certainly down to the 13th century, it was Hinduism which, in this first place, inspired the great Indianised states of Asia, and sowed the seed of their most original and most valuable art. Apart from the Sailendra and Borobudur, Mahayana Buddhism remained in the background, and, moreover, even in China it was only a secondary stream in the world of thought and of art. After the collapse of the Hindu societies under the blows of the men from the north and of Islam, Hinayana Buddhism offered consolation to peoples who had already lost their taste for living. It is true that political circumstances were then much more unfavourable, but one cannot pretend that it then brought about the flowering of any art to be ranked among the greatest. Moreover in Champa and in the islands of Indonesia, it did not even survive.

Justice should therefore be rendered to Hinduism, and to the worship of Siva in particular, for its striking achievement. To it we owe the most brilliantly creative societies. We should give thanks to it for Angkor, Prambanam, Panataran and many others. Clearly that was because it offered both a remarkable, harmoniously worked-out explanation of the universe, and an effective social system. On the other hand Buddhism, by its very nature, led men to free themselves from their surroundings, and,

in the first place, led the individual to free himself from society. It is therefore easy to see how it was checked in India, and why it sometimes perished outside India.

Silver Towers, Binh-dinh, Central Vietnam. Relief of worshippers. Cham art; Binh-dinh style: first half of the 12th century. *Sandstone; height 0,83 m. Tourane Museum.*

Phra Prang Sam Yot, Lopburi, Siam. Eastern facade of the northern tower; detail of the stucco decoration at the base of the pilasters. Provincial Khmer art; Lopburi style: second half of the 12th century. *Stucco over brick: height of the relief 0,50 m.*

XI. THE THAI CONQUEST. INDOCHINA UNDER THE SPELL OF THE BUDDHISM OF RENUNCIATION

THE THAI INVASION

In the 13th century the part of Indochina to the west of the Mekong came under the rule of the Thai people. Sprung from the same stock as the Vietnamese, the Thai had been slowly driven out from the Blue River basin by the progress of Chinese power in the south of that land. One by one they worked their way up the valleys of Kwang-tung, Kwang-si and Yunnan, where in the 8th century they allied themselves to the kingdom of Nan-chao. But the impassable barrier of the Himalayas rose further to the west, and Chinese pressure did not relax. So the only way out left was by the great valleys descending to the south from the watershed of Yunnan, which led to the rich lands of Indochina. The Thai infiltrated down these gorges, first reaching and then dominating the highlands of Laos, northern Siam and upper Burma.

When the Vietnamese, at about the same time, began to put parallel pressure on Champa, they were already a nation well equipped by Chinese civilisation, and they went into the struggle with at least even chances of success. But the Thai who reached the fringes of Indianised countries dominated by the incomparable prestige of Angkor, were but turbulent highlanders, without writing, religion or unity. The bas-reliefs of Angkor Vat show them as uncouth, grotesque barbarians marching as scouts ahead of the Khmer army. Obviously they had no chance of crushing even the frontier posts of the Khmer Empire. With greater wisdom they sent themselves to school there and gradually assimilated the lessons which were soon to make them the heirs of Angkor.

As Dvaravati was their essential point of contact, the Thai were very soon converted to Hinayana Buddhism. To a great extent they merged with the Mon population of that region, from whom they had learnt the most. Thus by the end of the 13th century they had become almost identical with their teachers, on whom they had simply imposed their feudal organisation and their language. Profiting by the exhaustion of Angkor, by Vietnamese pressure on Champa, and finally by the dislocation of Asia by the Mongol conquest, they began to gain power in western Indochina, and also in Siam and Burma. But their education made them the champions of Indianised civilisation, so that they just became its new masters, instead of destroying it as the Vietnamese did in Champa.

But Thai dominance was not unbounded. On one side the Burmese, in spite of their common religion, never ceased to threaten them, and at the slightest opportunity to ravage the land most cruelly. On the other side

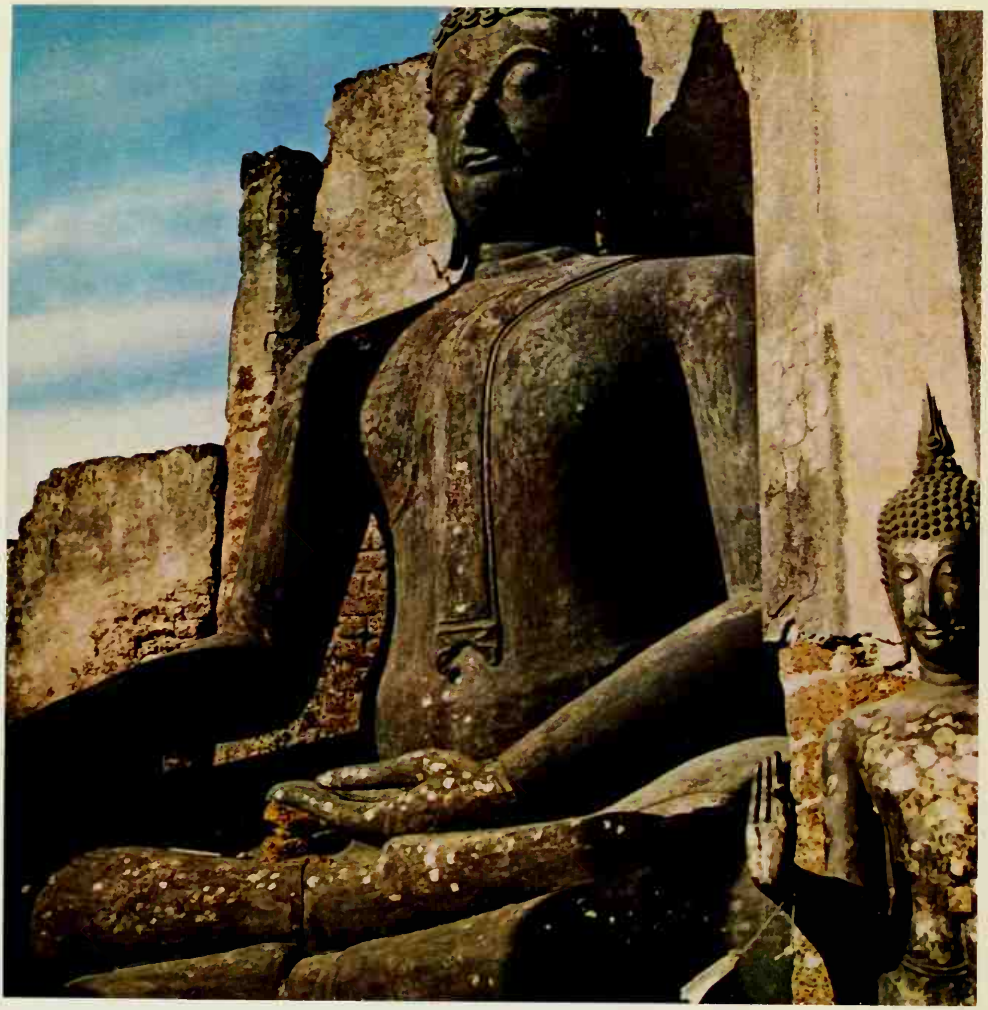
the Thai had gained nothing by destroying the civilisation of Angkor, and turning Cambodia into a desert. They did not know how to exploit the delta, because they were totally ignorant about the irrigation of flat land. They were moreover shut in at the bottom of their gulf, far from the main sea-roads of trade. For all its energy, this nation could never reach the first rank, nor did its conversion to the Buddhism of renunciation help it in that respect.

The formation of the Thai Kingdoms

Central Siam and the tableland of Korat had practically become parts of the Khmer Empire. To the north west, in the region round Lamphun, the Mon kingdom of Haripunjaya had more or less preserved its independence, and constituted both the vanguard of the Angkor civilisation and the last refuge of the Dvaravati tradition. From these contacts, the first Thai principalities took shape at the beginning of the 13th century. They appear in history between 1220 and 1230 in the regions of Bhamo, Chieng Sen and Luang Prabang. In the south the Thai chiefs of Lopburi overthrew the Khmer governor and founded a principality, the kingdom of Lavo. In the year 1287, the very year in which Pagan was captured by Sino-Mongolian forces, which is not a chance coincidence, three Thai chiefs, including those of Chieng Rai and Sukhothai, made a solemn alliance which was to mark the beginning of their rise.

The kingdom of Sukhothai was the first great Thai state, and the land in which the original traditions of this new civilisation took shape. Its fortunes are associated with the name of King Rama Kamheng (about 1281 to 1300) who was certainly an exceptional man. He reformed both the faith and the law, established a Thai alphabet, and began to unify the country under his own protection, carrying his armies as far as Ligor. Only the land of Lopburi seems to have resisted him in the south. At the same time his ally in the north, Mangray, extended his kingdom of Lan Na by annexing Haripunjaya — 1291 —, and establishing his capital at Chieng Mai in 1296. In that way the two main poles of attraction in the country were formed, and they have endured down to modern times. The south increasingly became a land of flat paddy fields, while the north remained more faithful to the traditional system of the Thai.

The two successors of Rama Kamheng, especially Lu Tai (1347 to 1361), are chiefly celebrated for their Buddhist piety. Unluckily for them a particularly energetic new line of Thai chiefs was growing in power in the region of Lopburi, with its capital first at U Thong and then at Ayuthya, which was founded by Ramadhipati in 1347. Ayuthya was to remain the centre of Siamese power until its destruction by the Burmese in 1767. Whereas Sukhothai had been at the meeting place of the roads of central Siam from the north, branching out towards Burma and to the tableland of Korat, Ayuthya was at the edge of the delta which was then beginning to be exploited, had direct access to the sea, and was at the head of the roads leading to Cambodia. Thus ended the descent of



Buddha calling on the earth to bear witness to his virtue. Wat Mahathat, Savankhalok, Siam. West facade of the western *mandapa*. Thai art; Sukhothai style: beginning of the 13th century; restored in the 16th and 17th centuries. *Brick and gilt stucco; height of the main Buddha 9 m.*

the Thai to the south, a descent which began in the region of Canton in the first centuries of our era.

The successors of Ramadhipati consolidated his kingdom. Paramaraja I (1370 to 1388) conquered the kings of Sukhothai and Chieng Mai. Ramesuen (1388 to 1395) ravaged Angkor in 1385, and under Paramaraja II (1424 to 1448) the Thai kingdom became the dominant power in central Indochina, after the final disappearance of Angkor in 1431.

THE FORMATION OF THAI ART

Thai art gave expression to the new social conditions and the many influences brought to bear on the feudal who came down and seized power in the plains.

Khmer models

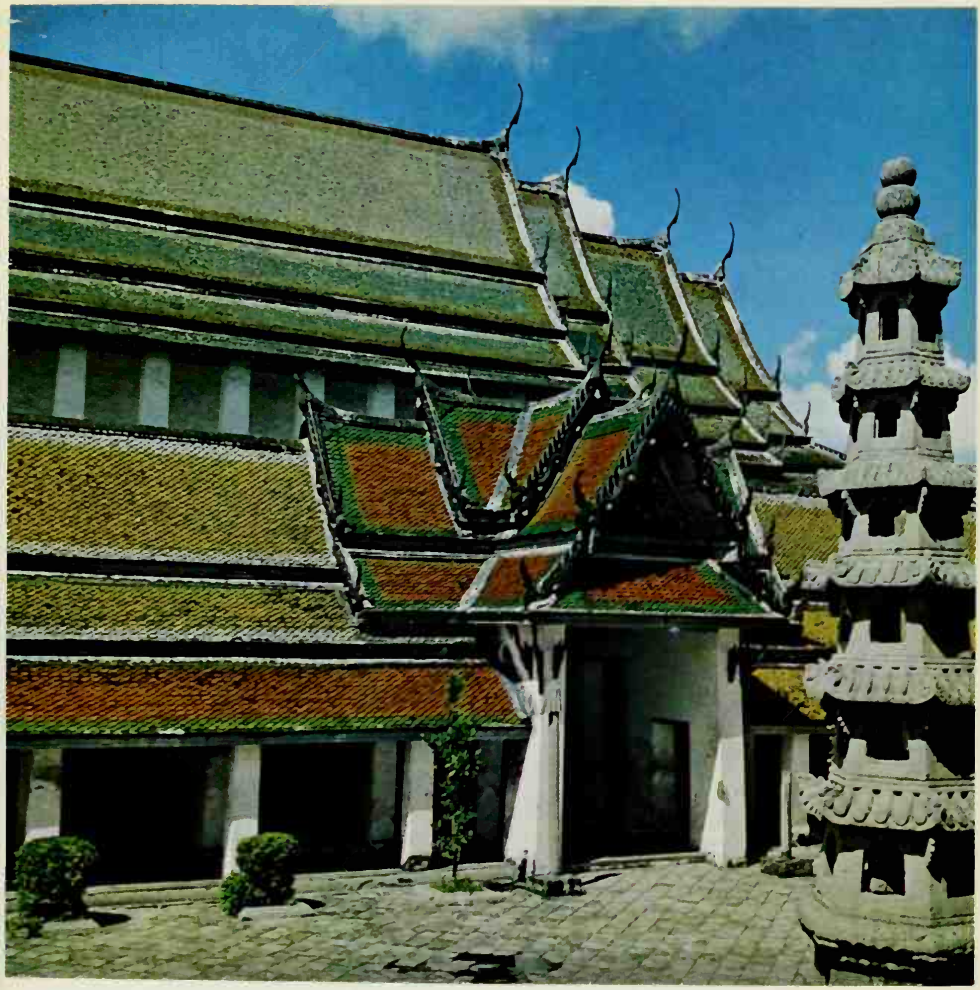
The monuments erected by the Khmer in their Siamese provinces come directly into the story of the art of Angkor, especially from the 11th to the beginning of the 12th century when the authority of those kings was at its height. This is so, for instance, at Phimai where Jayavarman II made new foundations and erected one of his portrait statues. We have

PLATE P. 171

mentioned that in his time the Buddhist tradition of Dvaravati was fused with the art of the Buddhist renaissance at Angkor, or more exactly, with the Bayon style and its 13th century developments. It is only in a few details that local traditions may show through the Khmer work, and so apparently unusual ornamental features at Phimai may be explained by the employment of native artisans. But the reverse influence is much more striking, and the Mons of Siam absorbed the Khmer tradition and perpetuated it after the eclipse of Angkor. It was one of the main sources of Thai art. In the 13th century Khmer provincial centres came to erect monuments in a peculiar style, which has been called the Lopburi style. The Phra Prang Sam Yot in this town is simply a Khmer shrine with three towers in a row copied from Angkor Vat, and it can therefore be dated to the second half of the 12th century. One must admit that it is very poor local work, and its only interest lies in the use of stucco for decoration, a technique abandoned at Angkor in the 10th century, but one which had flourished at Dvaravati from the time of the Nakhon Pathom mo-

PLATE P. 202

numents. The human masks at the base of the pilasters are particularly significant in this context, for they witness a resurgence of local ideas. The Wat Mahathat at Lopburi is already more developed. The main shrine, still inspired by the ogival tower at Angkor Vat, has its disproportionate height still further stressed by an imposing pedestal. The false storeys and skewbacks are so multiplied that the structure dissolves. The inner cellar is increasingly reduced in size, until it ends up as no more than a chamber for relics. In any case, perched on that enormous pedestal, it was no longer accessible and so would not have served for ritual purposes. Monuments of the Phra Prang Sam Yot type are also found further north, at Sukhothai, where the Khmer colony in that region was. They are the Vat Phra Phai Luong, the San Phra Sua Muong and the Vat Sisawai. Finally the whole is treated as a solid mass of brick, and could



Wat Suthat, Bangkok, Siam. South side of the main sanctuary. Siamese art, Bangkok style; beginning of the 19th century. *Brick, stucco and tiles.*

therefore be confused with buildings intended as nothing but shrines for relics. Such a type had already been found at Nakhon Pathom, and was to prevail in the school more directly inspired by the art of Dvaravati. The sculpture of the Lavo kingdom carried on the Dvaravati tradition, particularly that of the standing Buddhas with the hands raised symmetrically in front of the breast, clad in very simple clothes, and characterised by a vertical band falling between the legs. But the Bayon style exercised a strong influence, notably the type of Buddha sitting under the *naga*, with aquiline nose, lowered eyes with a sinuous line for the upper eyelid, enigmatic smile, and hair treated in flat circles, often delineated by a smooth ribbon.

Survivals of Dvaravati art

Naturally enough the art of Dvaravati survived longest and with least adulteration, in Haripunjaya which kept its independence. A particularly interesting group of buildings at Lamphun illustrates its last creative phase. The Vat Kukut was founded by the Mon King Adiccaraya (1120 to 1150), and altered to its present state by Sabbadisiddhi in 1218. This brick building comprises a square platform with sides 25 yards long, and five diminishing cubic storeys reaching a height of 92 feet, each face decorated with three niches containing standing terracota Buddhas. There must have been a pinnacle at the top. It is the final stage of such commemorative and reliquary monuments as those at Vat Phra Pathon, a type found again at Pagan in Burma after the reign of Kyanzittha. We know that the latter took architectural advice from monks fleeing before the Islamic invasion of Bengal, who described to him the Buddhist monasteries at Udayagiri in Orissa. In India between 1079 and 1086 the Burmese themselves restored the great temple of Bodhgaya, which served as a Hinayana Buddhist model throughout Asia. At the same time Burmese influence is apparent in the Dvaravati art of this time preserved in Haripunjaya. Vat Kukut is the first of a series of similar buildings including Vat Mahathat at Lamphun (its actual state dating from 1447), and Vat Si Liem near Chieng Mai. It is curious that an exactly similar monument which one could, without much hesitation, attribute to the school of Haripunjaya, is found in Ceylon. It is the Sat Maha Prasada at Polonnaruva, and was probably founded by Mon Buddhists who had come to Ceylon as the Mecca of Theravada Buddhists. It is the only case in which south east Asia rendered such homage to the India from which it had learnt both faith and art.

FIG. 32

Unluckily we know very little about the sculpture of Haripunjaya, a sad gap in our knowledge, since it must have played a part in the evolution of the great Thai style of Sukhothai.

THAI ART

With the political triumph of the Thai under Rama Kamheng, a new art took shape as the expression of that society. Enough has already been said about the relation between Theravada Buddhist art and that of Cambodia after Angkor, and the situation in Siam was much the same.

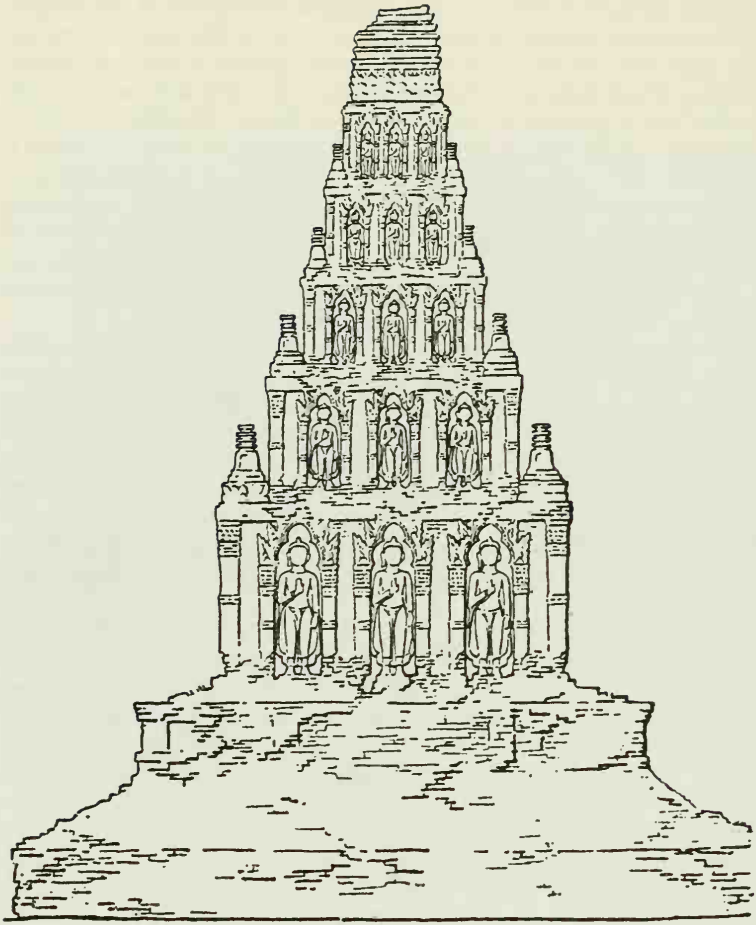


FIG. 32 — *Elevation of Wat Kukut, Lamphun, Siam.*

But the imposition of Thai political power over the native Mon, modified the political structure. The Thai formed a feudal society. The chief surrounded by his family, clients and free men, controlled a certain cultivable area and claimed feudal service. The concentration of Angkor was past, and in Siam provincial notables always counted for something. The Thai chief had some religious power, for he saw to the worship of the spirit of the soil, the *phi muong*, and a great part of his pre-emininence depended on that. On a modest scale it resembled the Chinese system, in which the

Emperor brought together all the Spirits of the regions of the Empire by his universal worship in the Temple of Heaven. The parallel does not arise by chance, for the Thai belonged to the primitive world of Chinese thought. These cults were to continue in Siam, and were substantially to affect the orthodoxy of certain aspects of Siamese Buddhism. A particular statue of Gautama may be surrounded by ardent worship because it is thought to contain some extraordinary energy, in fact the Spirit of the place in which it is erected. On a hill near Sukhothai Rama Kamheng installed the "Lord of the Summit" who was "above all the Spirits of the Kingdom". This is very close to the god-king and the *linga* erected in the temple-mountain of the Khmer. In our own day the Emerald Buddha, the palladium of Siam, perpetuates this tradition.

There is no doubt that the gentleness of Buddhism penetrated the spirits of the Thai. In his amazingly autobiographical inscriptions Rama Kamheng expatiates on his role as "father" of his people. Even discounting official paeans, there can be no doubt about the profound reaction against the crushing royal hegemony of the Khmer. There was the same feeling in Cambodia, and that to a great extent explains the success of the Thai over Angkor.

The art of Sukhothai

Rama Kamheng desired temples worthy of his faith in a place of residence corresponding with his power. He established himself in the twin cities of Sukhothai and Savankhalok, and most of his foundations are still found there. Naturally the art of his reign, entirely consecrated to Theravada Buddhism, derived most of its plastic formulas and iconography from the Khmer, through their provincial monuments, and from the art of Dvaravati, especially in the form perpetuated in Haripunjaya. We simply do not know whether the Thai already possessed any art or aesthetic tradition which could have played a part. We do know that, since the time of the distant Nan-chao in the 8th century, a particular style of Buddhist bronzes had evolved in Yunnan, a part of the world subject to the various influences of India, China, Burma and central Asia. We are inclined to think that this tradition survived among the Thai, for instance in the case of the portable statues of Buddha, and they may explain some otherwise unexpected traits in the art of Sukhothai. Thai architecture abandons stone in favour of stucco covered brick. Unluckily Khmer forms, which certainly did not excel in structure and use of materials, were copied in this amorphous medium, ending up as literally boneless masses void of all logic. The main part of the temple is the sanctuary, the *prang* derived from the Khmer tower-sanctuary. In front of it is a *mandapa* on brick columns, supporting a wood and tile roof, and generally containing a colossal statue of Buddha. Sometimes this sanctuary would be of imposing dimensions, and in that case it would perform the function of the *vihara*, or meeting-place of the monks. *Stupas* or commemorative monuments often surrounded the sanctuary, being

Panel of painted lacquer. Scene in the court of a palace. Siamese art; Bangkok style: middle of the 19th century. *Lacquer with added colours; height of the scene 0,50 m. Collection of Prince Piya Rangsit, Bangkok.*

either combined with it on a great terrace or placed in the courts. They either imitated the forms taken over in Burma from India, especially the bell-shaped *stupas,* or combined the shapes of Khmer tower-sanctuaries with that of such staged commemorative monuments as that of Vat Kukut. These different systems can be seen evolving at Sukhothai. A *mandapa* on columns was added to an old Khmer temple, and its pediments were reshaped in stucco with Buddhist subjects. Examples are Vat Phra Phai Luong and Vat Sisawai. The Vat Mahathat at Savankhalok is the first complete example of a sanctuary combining the great hall containing a colossal statue of Buddha, and a *prang* derived from the Khmer tower-sanctuary. A beautiful bell-shaped *stupa* completes the whole. Sometimes one vast hall contains a single colossal statue of Buddha, for example Vat Si Chum at Sukhothai. There were also many monuments of the commemorative type erected either on their own or in association with sanctuaries. It is in these that the art of Sukhothai shows some signs of originality, felicitously combining elements of diverse origin. Sometimes there is the platform and main building of a Khmer tower-sanctuary, surmounted by a bulb derived from the bell *stupa,* as in the case of Vat Mahathat at Sukhothai and Vat Chedi Chet Theo at Savankhalok. Or there may be a reliquary shrine, again surmounted by a bulb, and placed on a great terrace ornamented with miniature buildings, such as the Vat Lak Muong at Savankhalok. Or there may be a *stupa* decorated with niches and placed on a platform, such as Vat Chang Lom at Savankhalok and Khao Phra Bat Noy at Sukhothai.

PLATE P. 205

The Buddhist sculpture at Sukhothai is certainly much more original than the architecture. There has been much speculation about its origin, some seeing it as a new, sudden, ecstatic inspiration, and others as an art devised to satisfy Rama Kamheng. Without denying the importance of the King's outstanding personality as a source, or the creative response to a new and dynamic society, we still feel that both the originality and the beauty has been somewhat exaggerated. Very probably the type derived partly from Buddhas of the Bayon style, and partly from those of southern China. The two commonest types are Buddha walking forward, and Buddha sitting "like a tailor", calling the earth to witness his virtues by touching it with his right hand. The modelling of the body is in curves, yet there is something precise and dry about the sharp angles at which the curves join. This results in great simplicity and serenity, in the best examples such as the well known Buddha of Vat Mahathat at Pitsanulok, but the all too numerous ordinary examples are rotund and conventional. The curls of the hair are rendered by conic points, and the chignon, or *ushnisha,* loses its shape more and more to turn into a flame crowning the head, and the headdress often comes to a point over the forehead. The oval faces are made to look still longer by the sharp half circles of the eyebrows which follow straight down into the aquiline ridge of

PLATE P. 205

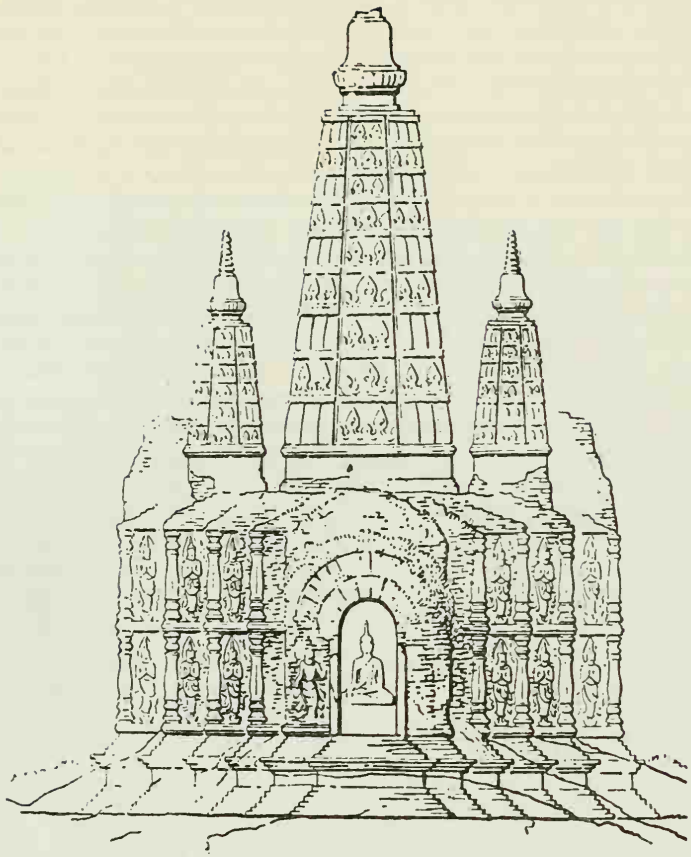


FIG. 33 — *Elevation of Wat Chet Yot, Chieng Mai, Siam.*

the nose. The very long arms lose all sense of verisimilitude, and the legs, which are very conventionally superimposed, stress the deliberate stylisation of the body. In the course of the 14th and 15th century the Sukhothai Buddha became a stereotype which spread throughout Siam and profoundly influenced all the regional schools.

To conclude, the art of Sukhothai shows a taste for innovation which is often interesting, vitality and a distinct personality. This last point is worth stressing, for this is the only really original moment in Thai art, which afterwards deliberately turns back to the Khmer repertoire.

It would do it less than justice simply to treat it as a prolongation of the Bayon style, or of the art of Dvaravati. But, even so, one must admit that it is not a great art. The sculpture does not rise above a felicitous, but conventional, stylisation. The architecture is made out of separate bits and pieces piled indiscriminately together, without the least idea of structure, rhythm or perspective. All art must be judged by its capacity to create plastic space.

The regional school

At the same time as Sukhothai, before the land was unified, local schools existed in the various Thai principalities. Of course, as Sukhothai rose in power politically, they were influenced by this first great centre of Thai art, and later they merged in the art of Ayuthya in the 14th century. In the north the kingdom of Lan Na with its centre at Chieng Mai was largely inspired by the Haripunjaya tradition, and it continued its development through the 13th and, especially, the 14th century, when the devout King Guna (1355 to 1385), drawing inspiration from Sinhalese models, evolved an individual style. Generally speaking Indian models, Pala-Sena at first and then, as mentioned, Sinhalese, seem to have been rather strictly copied. It used to be thought that the first Thai type of Buddha evolved here in the 13th century, and it was attributed to what was called the Chieng Sen school. However, it has recently been convincingly demonstrated that most of these works belong to the 15th century, and we will treat them in their chronological context. Nevertheless the sculpture of Lan Na may have provided permanent link, often by way of Burma, with the Indian tradition.

In the south the style of U Thong derived from the Mon-Khmer tradition of Lavo. It flourished at the end of the 13th and during the first half of the 14th century, down to the foundation of Ayuthya. The predominance of Khmer influence in particular, the Bayon style, shows clearly in the figures of Buddha which are represented in the conventional way under a *naga*, and this in itself is significant. The face is almost square, with scarcely arched eyebrows, broad nose and full lips. Flattened curls represent the hair which comes up to realistic chignon, and they

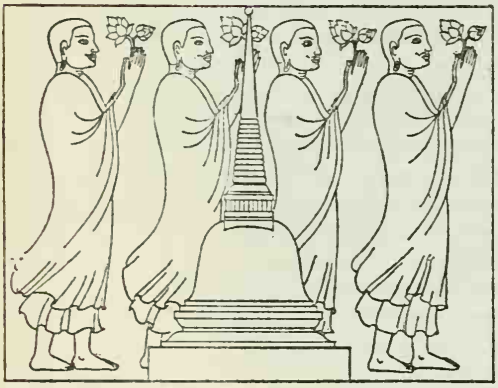


FIG. 34 — *Worshippers bringing lotus flowers to a stupa. Fresco from Wat Sri Sanpet, Ayudhya, Siam, Ayudhya style; XVth century.*

are delineated by a plain band. The anatomy stays close to nature, the crossed legs, for instance, really look crossed. It seems convenient to keep the term "U Thong style" for this first phase which occurred before the influence of Sukhothai was emphatically felt. Finally we should mention the style peculiar to the extreme south, and particularly to the region round Nakon Sri Thammarat in the Malayan peninsula. Geographical factors there, as in the north, seem to have led to the retention of Indian, or, to be more exact, Sinhalese traditions.

SIAMESE ART

The foundation of Ayuthya and the unification of the land led to the fusion of these diverse schools into one homogeneous style, which we call "Siamese" to distinguish it from Thai art already described, but this new style did not obliterate all regional nuances. Its most striking cha-

That Luang, Vientiane, Laos. East side. Laotian art: founded in 1586 by Setthathirath; restored in the 18th and 19th centuries. *Brick, gilt stucco and tiles; height to the top of the spire 35 m.*

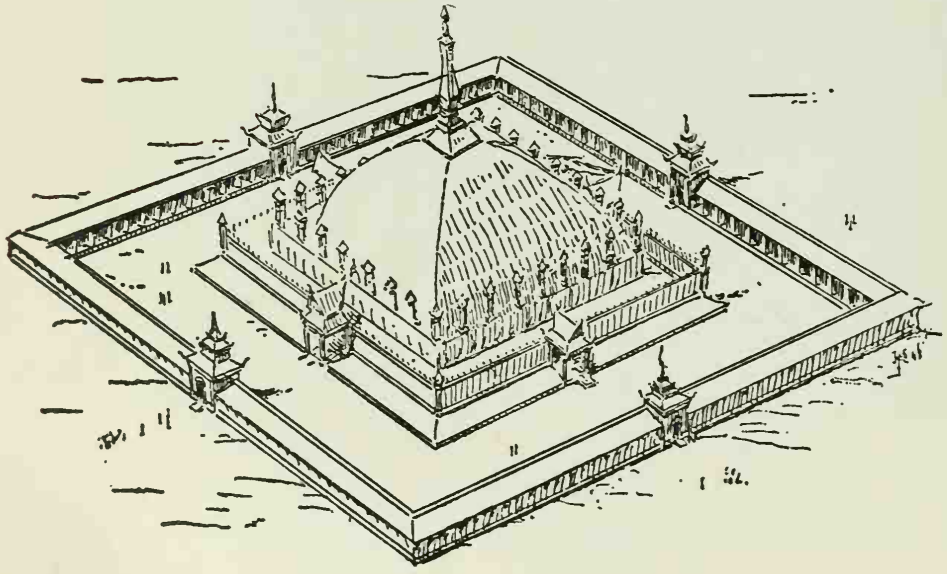
racteristic was a systematic return to Khmer models. The kings of Ayuthya were the conquerors of Angkor, and came strongly under its influence, for they claimed to be the heirs of the Khmer kings, copying the organisation of their court, and their pretensions to quasi-divine honours.

The Ayuthya style

In the first phase (late 13th and early 14th century) the U Thong style evolved under the increasingly marked influence of Sukhothai. In the middle of the 14th century Ayuthya annexed Sukhothai and its influence on their sculpture became still stronger. This was especially the case under King Trailokanatha who had lived for ten years at Pitsanulok before he succeeded his father on the throne of Ayuthya in 1448. From that time onwards some Khmer architectural themes are also copied. This copying tendency became predominant in the 17th century under Kings Prasat Thang (1630 to 1655) and Phra Narai (1656 to 1688) who even went to the length of reviving stone sculpture. By that time Siamese art had spread throughout the kingdom, and it was to continue almost unchanged down to the end of the 19th century under the first kings of the Bangkok period.

The architecture of the first phase evolves from that of Lavo. The *prang* derives from the Khmer tower-sanctuary, but it has been completely altered and deformed, and it is now preceeded by a hall with columns.

FIG. 35 — *Bird's eye view of That Luang, Vientiane, Laos.*



An example is the Vat Bhuddai Svarya, the oldest building at Ayuthya, dating from the first quarter of the 13th century. Towards the end of the 14th century a large number of Sukhothai types were adopted: among others the cylindrical shrine crowned with a *stupa* with reliquary monuments placed in the courts. After the beginning of the 15th century there are more elaborate monuments usually comprising a large terrace with a columned hall and a bell *stupa* surrounded by little *stupas* or other miniature buildings. Perhaps this fashion prevailed because the kings were increasingly anxious to erect imposing funeral monuments, a taste calling to the mind the kings of Angkor and owing a lot to them. Inside the *stupas* there were secret chambers decorated with frescoes and filled with precious votive objects. These votive gifts must have been intended to accompany the soul of the departed, for they included his arms, clothes and jewels. One can trace the evolution of this type in a long series of buildings at Ayuthya: Vat Phra Ram (about 1369), Vat Phra Mahathat (about 1374), Vat Rat Burana (1424), and finally Vat Sri Sanpet, built around 1500, which is the most complete and imposing. In the 17th century there was a deliberate return to Khmer models, copied either directly from Angkor, or from Khmer things either found in Siam or brought there. King Prasat Thong even constructed a miniature Angkor Vat, the Phra Nakhon Luong on the river Sak. There is a certain grandeur about these shrines with their tapering spires, especially the best preserved, Vat Jai Vadhanaram at Ayuthya, another building of Prasat Thong's. During this period the type of the Siamese pagoda became fixed, with walls curving slightly inwards towards the top, and fine steep roofs stepped back with overhanging eaves.

The same influences shaped the evolution of sculpture. The earliest Buddhas from Ayuthya have some Sukhothai characteristics added to the U Thong type; points represent the hair, but the smooth band is preserved; the *ushnisha* tends to turn into a flame, and the rotund type prevails. Then the return to Khmer fashions is marked by little engraved spirals, all going the same way, for the hair, and broader lips and nose. But the oval faces of Sukhothai and the sinuous outline of the eyes are preserved. For a brief moment stone comes back into favour, with results which, one must admit, are disappointing. There is however a bronze statue of a princess, which can probably be dated to about 1458 in the reign of Trailokanatha, and which, imitating a Khmer bronze, achieves an exceptional portrait. From the 16th century the jewelled type of Buddha comes into fashion. The clothes, overloaded with ornaments, form two thin sheets on either side of the body, like a membrane linking arms and legs. At this stage Siamese sculpture becomes so schematic and empty that it counts as work of craftsmanship, not art, and need not concern us here.

Although the Ayuthya style slowly spread over the whole of Siam, regional

Buddha walking. Found at Say Fong, Laos. Laotian art: 17th or 18th century. *Gilt bronze; height 1,10 m. Vat Phra Kèo Museum, Vientiane.*

peculiarities did not entirely disappear, and a systematic imitation of Indian models brought new life into the Chieng Mai school. In 1455 King Tiloka erected the Vat Chet Yot which copies, in the superstructure particularly, the great temple of Bhod Gaya, though the sham arches decorating it are a survival of the Mon commemorative monument tradition. The famous Indian Buddha type known as the "Lion of the Sakyas" provides the inspiration for the statues of this period, which used to be classed as "Chieng Sen style", but which were in fact mostly made between 1470 and 1565. The faces are exaggeratedly round and doll-like, the shoulders are broad, and the bodies powerfully built with slim waists. Realistic curls represent the hair, and the *ushnisha* is an ovoid button. A group of 15th and 16th century Buddhas from the south with particular characteristics have been called the Grahi school. In them memories of Khmer art were never lost, and there was a deliberate return to such types in the 16th century, especially in the sculpture of Vat Phra Mahathat at Chaiya.

FIG. 33

PAINTING

Thai painting would repay detailed study, for it is the most original and interesting branch of their art. Moreover a good many examples have recently been discovered, enabling us to date such work accurately, most of it belonging to the second phase of the Ayuthya style. The oldest examples are the very damaged frescoes from the cave of Silpa at Yala, and the more valuable engraved panels from Vat Si Chum at Sukhothai (1287). These are of Burmese inspiration but already show the characteristics of Thai drawing, i.e. clear and fluid outline enclosing the whole design in one single sweep, and the juxtaposition of planes.

The inner chambers of Vat Rat Burana (1424) and Vat Mahathat (1427) at Ayuthya have recently been discovered. Many features, in the former especially, show Chinese influence and perhaps even the hand of Chinese artists. For Siamese painting owed much to China; aerial perspective with palaces framing the scenes, views from a tower and backgrounds with animals disporting themselves on mountains and in meadows. But the linear treatment, and the unmixed, bright colours, separate for each object, are native. We should also not forget the existence of Khmer painting, which must have had some influence. The paintings at Vat Rat Burana are still primitive: the main element in their decoration consists of superimposed rows of worshippers and of Buddhas, either drawn in profile against a uniform background, or seated on elaborate thrones. Bright colours predominate; vermillion backgrounds and yellow robes for the monks, with touches of green and gold. At Vat Mahathat at Ratburi (late 15th century) there are similar processions of Buddhas against a yellow background. It is at Vat Yai Suwannaram at Phetburi (first half of the 17th century) that the first great mural compositions appear. Among these is a fine series of daemons adoring the Buddha, vigorously portrayed. From the time of Vat Buddhaisawan at Ayuthya

FIG. 34

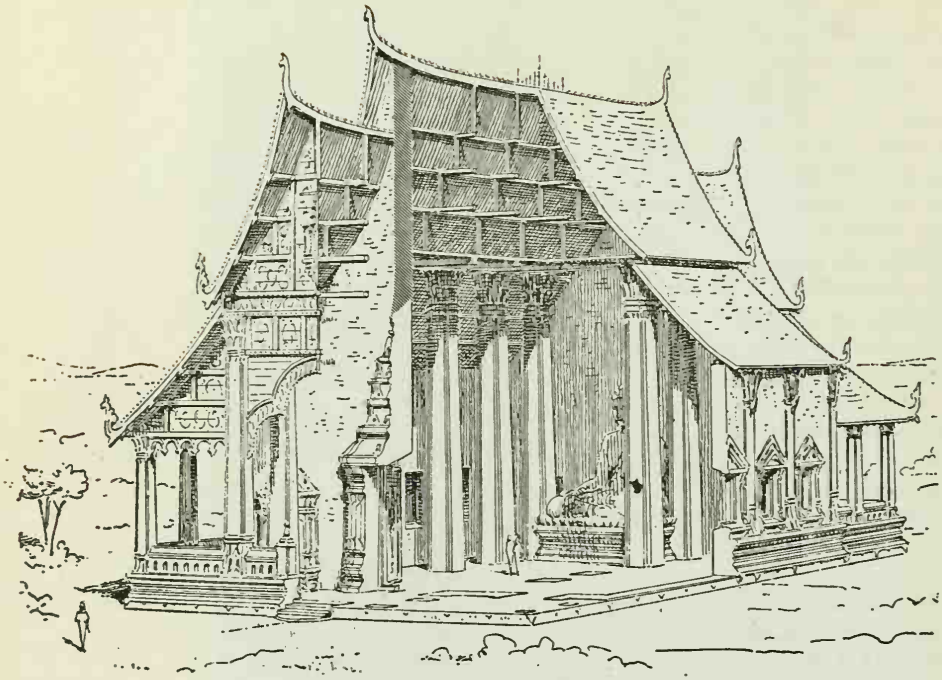


FIG. 36 — *Axonometric view of Phya Vat, Vientiane, Laos.*

(late 17th century) the influence of the theatre is apparent in the way the groups are disposed, for they seem to be acting their parts against a backcloth of dark foliage. The repertoire of Siamese painting becomes fixed at this time. Often each separate scene is enclosed in an architectural framework, and one scene follows another in chronological order against a wide dark coloured background. The figures are painted in light colours to stand out better. Their characteristics are so stressed that they look like the traditional types of the theatre, and can be recognised at first glance. The background landscapes remain very close to Chinese ones. This Chinese influence in painting occurs with the arrival of many Chinese refugees from the Mongol invasions and from the political troubles at the time when the Ming dynasty seized power. But this is only a continuation of the Chinese influence previously shown in the sculpture. One of its happiest consequences was the building of kilns

for pottery at Savankhalok. This ware imitates Yüan celadons, and the sandstone used gives it strength. The ornaments are carved out under a bluish grey glaze, which is sometimes of wonderful refinement and lustre. It is certainly one of the best of all ceramics inspired by China in southern seas. During the 15th century, then under Ming influence, the kilns produced pots imitating porcelain, with grey or brown painted decorations and fine architectural ceramics which are its most vivid creations. Unluckily no appreciable artistic revival is connected with the removal of the capital to Bangkok in 1767. The sculpture reproduces earlier work mechanically, or disastrously imitates the art of the Khmer and of Srivijaya. Great funeral monuments disappear, and *stupas* were usually erected in the courts of pagodas. These have imposing roofs of glazed tiles, which give a superb effect. The main building, which was decorated with frescoes, contained the assembly room in which the monks prayed before statues of Buddha. It is almost always surrounded by a cloister housing interminable files of statues. A subsidiary building often contained a colossal statue of Buddha reclining to await death. Lacquer, inlay of mother-of-pearl, gilt, glazed tiles and lacquered-doors all make for sumptuous decoration. Chinese influence is patent everywhere and is responsible for many details of the execution.

The style of Bangkok

The most beautiful pagodas are in Bangkok or its neighbourhood. Vat Buddhaisawan (1795-7) is the oldest. Vat Suvannaram at Thonburi, and Vat Suthat both date from the 19th century, as do also Vat Rat Burana at Pitsanulok and Vat Phra Sing at Chieng Mai. But the pagodas in the north of the country preserve some ancient features, for example wooden facades entirely covered in decoration, and constitute a sort of anthology of the more typically Thai characteristics in contrast to the cosmopolitan art of the south.

PLATE P. 207

The frescoes of that style bear clear traces of the first contacts with Europe. There is geometrical perspective, backgrounds of gardens in French taste, pastel colours, and witty caricatures of English sailors and French diplomats. The best examples are found at Vat Suthat, Vat Buddhaisawan and Vat Suvannaram. There are also many panel pictures, screens and cupboards for manuscripts decorated with lacquer paintings. The artists, being more at ease, show to better advantage in these works than in the large compositions. The impassive figures of Buddha and of the kings contrast with genre scenes in the streets, in the houses, or in the courts of a palace, which are full of seductive charm. Like the architecture, the painting in the north lags behind in fashion, but is sometimes more expressive. Paper and canvas are more often employed. The great figures of Buddha seated on elaborate thrones, or placed against an architectural background, are remarkable for their power and their stylisation.

PLATE P. 211

We must not conclude this brief account of Siamese art without mentioning that, as the Siamese domain expanded, its art and iconography

Vat Sisaket, Vientiane, Laos. Library in the northwest corner. Laotian art: about 1820. *Stuccoed brick and wood; height to top of spire 12,50 m*

also spread, in Cambodia especially. This does not apply to the architecture of the pagodas which kept its peculiar system of overlapping roofs and seldom used glazed tiles, nor the carved ornament which remained purely Cambodian, but it does apply to the form and execution of the figures of Buddha and to the paintings. Naturally such influence was even more marked in Laos, a Thai land and one long under the aegis of Siam.

THE ART OF LAOS

The first great Thai kingdom in Laos was that of Lan Xang, founded by Fa Ngoum (1353 to 1373), which formed the political backbone for the subsequent development of the country. Luang Prabang was the northern capital in which the influence of the Thai of Chieng Mai, and then the influence of the Burmese predominated. The southern capital was Vientiane, and there the Khmer heritage, and later the power of Ayuthya were the dominant factors. As the Thai in Siam had mixed with the Mon-Khmer population, so did the Thai in Laos impose themselves on the majority of Mon-Khmer stock who are still represented today by the Kha peoples. The narrow valley of the Mekong hardly permitted the formation of a united and prosperous society. And the extremely primitive condition of the Kha tribes, combined with their distance from the great centres of civilisation at Angkor and Ayuthya, were not factors favouring the growth of a dynamic civilisation. The Thai in Laos never got beyond the stage of petty feudal principalities shut up in their highland valleys. Their conversion to Theravada Buddhism provided the essential civilising stimulus. Naturally in view of their race, geographical position and religion, they were chiefly influenced by their brothers to the west in Burma and Siam.

Architecture

No Khmer temples had been built further to the north than Vat Phu in the Bassak region, and the people of Laos never took to stone architecture. Moreover the lapse of time between the eclipse of Angkor and the formation of the first Lao kingdoms was too great for the local population to bridge the gap and continue that tradition. Hence the few monuments in Laos built of durable materials, brick and stucco, derive from the architecture of Ayuthya. The most interesting is the That Luang at Vientiane founded in 1586 by King Setthathirat. He imitated contemporary buildings in Siam. The *stupa* rises from an enclosed platform, and bears on its summit an elegant finial supported on lotus petals, which is a last echo of the architecture of Sukhothai. A cloister forms the external wall. The unity of the composition, the very felicitous replicas of the main building which frame the base of the *stupa* and grow larger towards the outside, and the clear-cut design of the finial, make the assured success of this building which is more interesting perhaps than the composite and inharmonious erections at Ayuthya.

PLATE P. 215

FIG. 35

The Buddhist sculpture is also derived from Ayuthya. The walking Buddhas are particularly interesting. The legs are close together and the

PLATE P. 218 robe, tight round the hips, and spreading out over broad shoulders, stresses the forward movement. In the best examples the calm and harmonious features avoid the excessively geometrical character of contemporary Thai works. An aquiline nose and elegant profile are typical of this style. But unluckily such purity of line is seldom found. Either the curves are clumsy and exaggerated, or they are spoilt by a profusion of too heavy ornament.

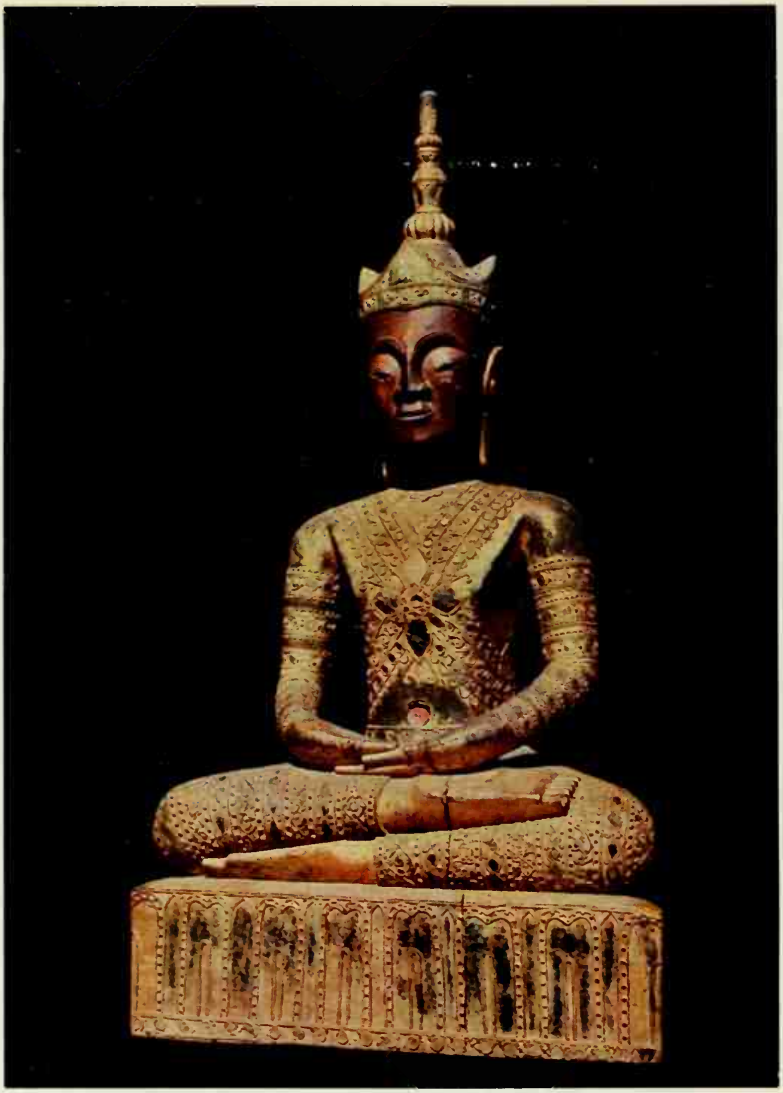
The pagodas of Laos are interesting as they preserve the traditional forms such as those found at Chieng Mai. Brick columns support a wooden roof with successive kingposts dividing the weight over the tie-beams. The slope of the roof is very steep, but graceful in its curve, and

FIG. 36 it overhangs so far that it encloses the verandah round the building. The gables are decorated with lovely bands of ornament, made either of carved and gilt panels of wood, or of stucco. The doors of the entrance are often outstandingly lovely. However the frescoes are only interesting for their subjects, and seen from their quiet courts and shady cloisters, there is charm in the beautiful pagodas of Vientiane and Luang Prabang. Sometimes there is a library for the manuscripts which, with the diamond-shapes of the storeys of its roof, recalls the architecture of Burma and,

PLATE P. 222 further afield, those more ancient Indian buildings of which the Khmer tower-sanctuaries were replicas in stone.

Burmese influence is particularly to the fore in the extreme north of the country, the region of Muong Sing, and as far south as Luang Prabang. In that part of Laos the population were addicted to a very degenerate form of Buddhism heavily overlaid with local superstitions, which would make an interesting study for anyone concerned with the progressive stages of the corruption of the great Indian religion. Some gilt wood

PLATE P. 225 carvings decorated with fragments of iridescent glass appear to come from those parts. The hieratic and rather savage grandeur of their features give these creations their interest. They are the final product, after twenty centuries of history, of the radiation of Indian civilisation at its furthest geographical and human limits.



Buddha in contemplation. Probably from the Lu country to the northwest of Laos. Provincial Laotian art: 18th century? *Gilded wood overlaid with glazed lead; height 0,70 m. Vat Phra Kèo Museum, Vientiane.*

XII. THE VIETNAMESE INVASION AND THE IMPACT OF EUROPEANS

THE VIETNAMESE CONQUEST

From the year 1225, under the Tran dynasty, the Vietnamese began to get the better of the Cham, and methodically to occupy the eastern coast of Indochina. They were temporarily held back first by the threat from the Mongols, and then by the resistance of the Cham hero Che Bong Nga, and were called to a halt by the Ming who recovered Tonkin for the Chinese Empire between 1413 and 1438.

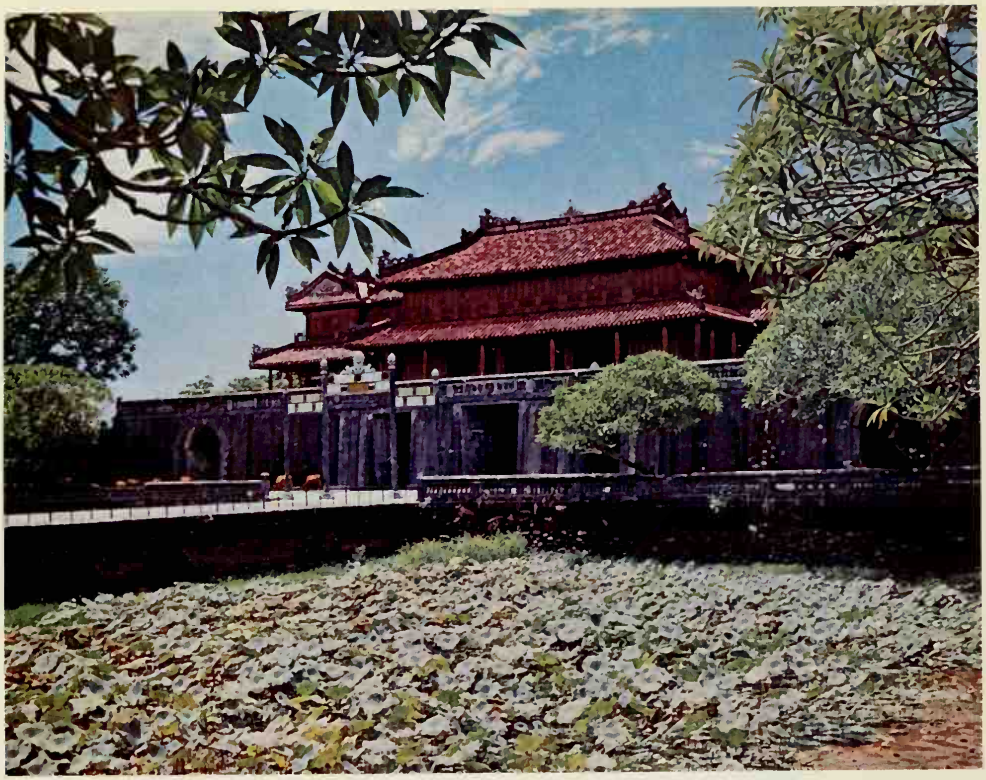
Lê-Loi (1428 to 1433) freed his country from this last period of Chinese sovereignty, and founded the dynasty of the Posterior Lê which ruled until 1527 and completed the conquest of Champa. The country was reorganised and really became an empire. Despite internal struggles between the clans of Trinh and Nguyen, from the 17th century onwards Vietnamese colonies began to take possession of Cochin China by land and sea, and to systematically occupy the delta of the Mekong. This eliminated the last remnants of the Cham and Cambodians. This movement was assisted by refugees fleeing from China after the fall of the Ming, who sought asylum with the Emperor of Annam. To get rid of these embarrassing guests, the Emperor granted them lands in Cochin China, and that is the origin of the present-day Chinese colonies. The Nguyen had proclaimed themselves emperors in 1533. In 1773 the rebellion of the brothers Tay-Son weakened their authority. Nguyen-An, who reigned from 1802 to 1819 under the name of Gia-long, succeeded in defeating them and, with the help of a few Frenchmen, unified the country. At that time Vietnam not only reached its present frontiers, but also began to work its way up the Mekong in opposition to the Thai. In the middle of the 19th century the court at Hue appointed a viceroy at Phnom Penh. Thus, after 2000 years of evolution the two northern races had almost completed the encirclement of indianised Indochina when the French conquest halted further development.

THE ART OF VIETNAM

The Dai-la period was the last moment when the Vietnamese gave some proof of individuality. After that their art became increasingly a reflection of Chinese styles. This subordination resulted both from Yüan and Ming influence, and from the imperial organisation of the country which of set purpose followed the example of Peking.

Tran art

From the middle of the 12th to the end of the 14th century, memories of the Dai-la tradition gradually merged in the style of the Tran dynasty. Ornament became heavier and more clumsy as one sees by the altar of the pagoda of Thien-phuc at Sai-son (Son-tay) dating from 1132, and the tomb in the Pho-minh pagoda at Tuc-mac (Nam-dinh) of 1310. On



Imperial Palace, Hue, Central Vietnam. Southern Gate (Ngo-mon) and Belvedere of the Five Phoenixes. Vietnamese art, Nguyen period: 19th century. Built in 1833 in Gia-Long's reign. *Stone, wood and tiles.*

the other hand great fortified cities were built and layed out in accordance with imposing plans. The finest of these is the citadel of Ho (Thanh-hoa) built in 1397. Its city gates are still preserved, and with their three vaulted carriage-ways through the massive masonry, they rival the finest Chinese buildings.

The Le style

From 1428 to 1769 Vietnamese art is bogged down in formulas. Despite the absorption of Champa, no foreign influence, save that of China, affected them. However execution and technique greatly improved, so that some of their works take an honourable place among Chinese provincial products.

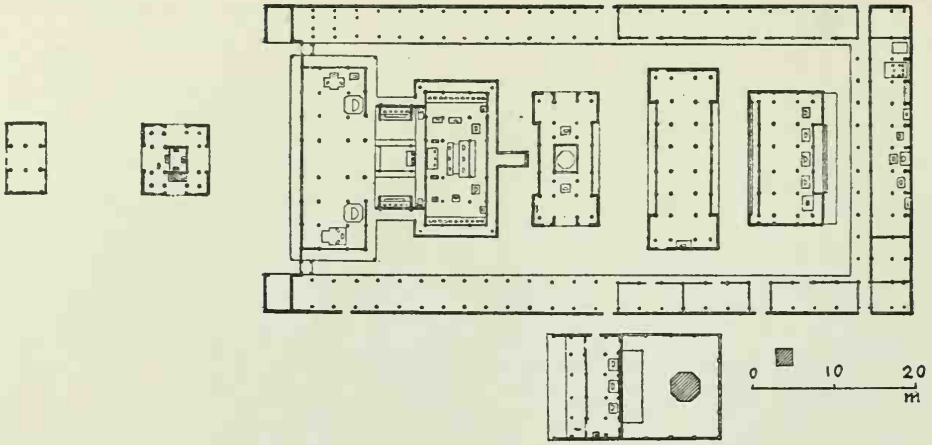


FIG. 37 — *Plan of the But-tap pagoda, Ninh-phuc, Bac-ninh, Tonkin.*

The first phase corresponds with the establishment of the kings at Lam-son (Thanh-hoa). The progress of art between 1428 and about 1500 can be traced in the remains of the royal tombs. The finest of these remains are the stone stele engraved with the royal epitaphs. They are framed by rampant dragons against a background of leaves, and these are the most characteristic of their decorative elements, appearing again on the stone staircases of the terrace-platforms on which their palaces were built.

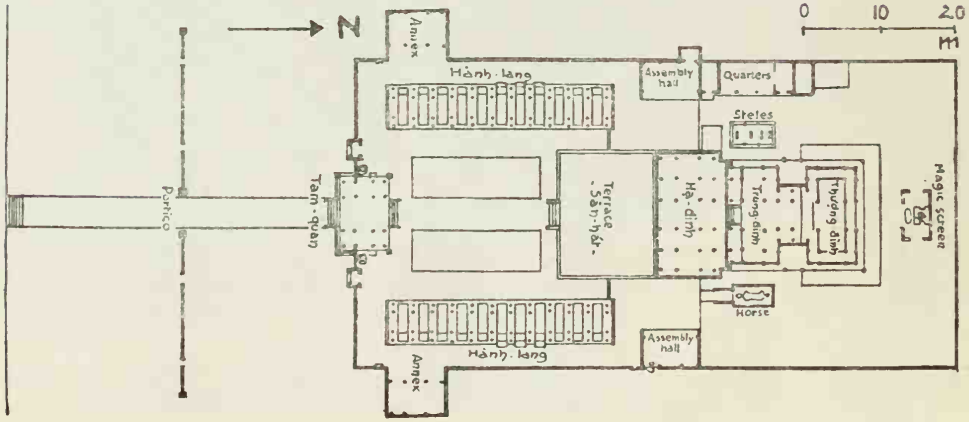
The second phase corresponds with the removal of the capital to Hoa-lu (Ninh-binh). Ornament became exaggeratedly luxuriant and overladen in imitation of the decadent late Ming style. Stone came into more general use, and because of this more monuments are preserved. There is the funerary temple of Dinh Tien-hoang at Hoa-lu (1607 to 1610), the Ton
FIG. 37 duc *stupa* at Trach-lam (Thanh-hoa) dating from 1631, the altar of the But-thap (Bac-ninh) pagoda (1646), and finally the tomb of the eunuch Nguyen-Dien at Lim (Bac-ninh) of 1769. To study the decoration of these various buildings is of no more than historical interest, for they are just copies of Chinese work. However the Vietnamese were capable of individual expression, for example the statue of the bronze Minh-Hanh in the Ton-duc *stupa* at Trach-lam. This is a wonderfully simple and vivid portrait in delightful contrast to the idols weighed down by garments covered in gold which squat heavily on the altars of the pagodas.

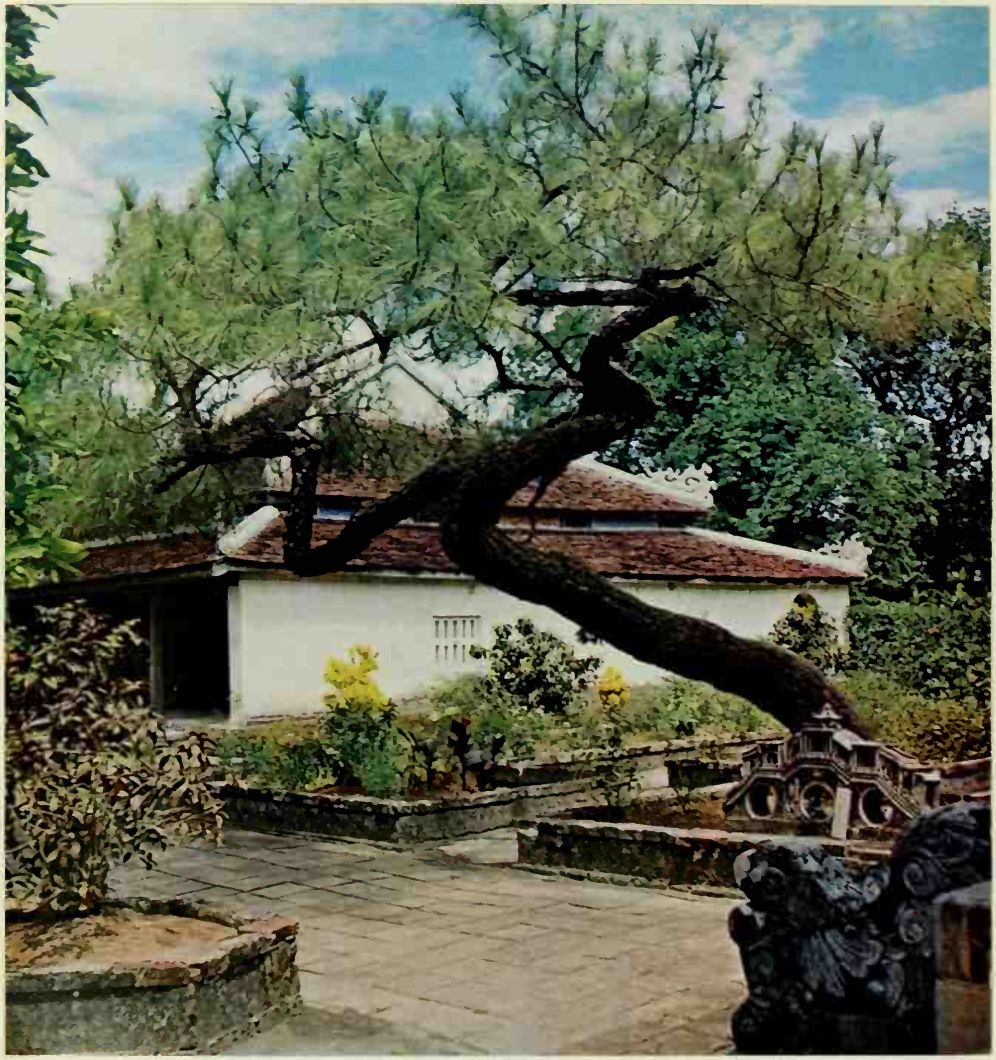
FIG. 37 The great pagodas of Tonkin, that of Ninh-phuc for instance, belong to this period. These pagodas are built at the far end of a court dominated by a three-storeyed gatehouse with three gates. The temple itself, the

chua, is generally H-shaped with galleries round it. The roofs are the most important element in these buildings, rising almost from the ground right to the summit in a fine majestic sweep. The columns supporting the roof may be either axial or lateral. In the first case the columns generally support the main rafters under the roof-tree directly or with the aid of tie-beams. In the second case the tie-beams rest on the columns with kingposts to divide the weight of the rafters. The beams are tastefully carved, while the columns are plain. An original feature is the use of panels of carved wood between the rows of tie-beams and between the columns, where they form movable screens. While the roofs of the temples rise in one sweep, those of the bell-towers and the *stupas* may have any number of four-sided roofs one above another. At Tonkin flat unglazed tiles are usual, but in Annam tiles with one curved side and with bright glazes are obligatory for all imperial buildings in imitation of China. In the most important buildings stone may be used for the terrace and the balustrade round it, and also for the *stupas*. But then the stonework imitates the forms of wood and tile roofs.

We hardly know anything about the secular architecture of this time except what can be learnt from modern buildings in the old style. This was the field in which the Vietnamese showed the greatest originality. The *dinh*, or communal house built by each village, seems to continue the tradition of those houses at Dong-son which are the oldest communal buildings in the land. Whereas private houses in Vietnam, as in China, FIG. 38

FIG. 38 — *Plan of the dinh of Yen-so, Ha-dong, Tonkin.*





Garden of the Imperial Palace at Hue, Central Vietnam. The-mieu or Temple dynasty garden. Vietnamese art, Nguyen period: Built during the reign of Gia-Long (1802–1819) and his successors.

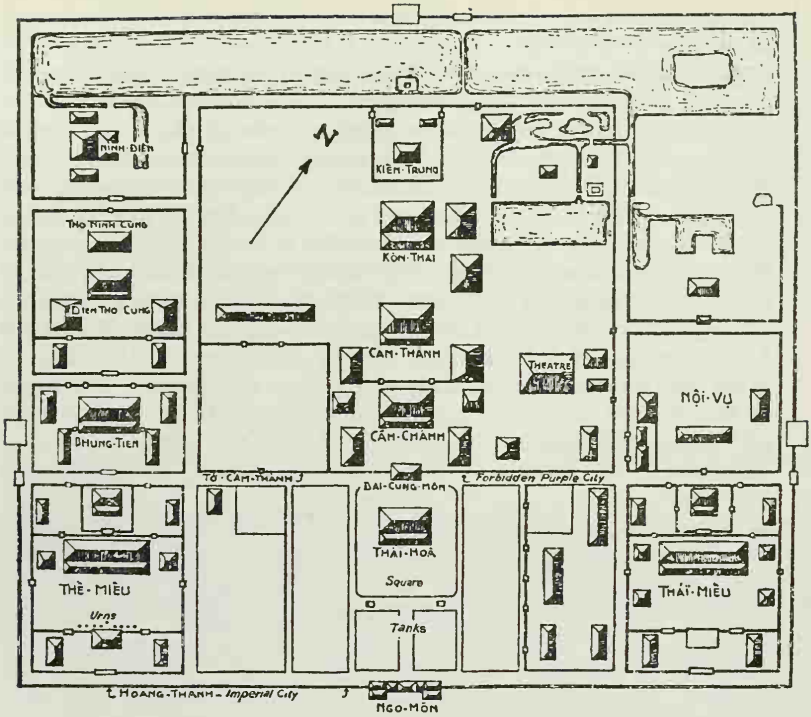


FIG. 39 — *Layout of the Imperial Palace, Huế, Central Vietnam.*

were on ground level, the *dinh* is raised on stilts, even though they are very low, which must be derived from those Indonesian houses pictured so long ago on the bronze drums from Dong-son. This was the building in which the village notables received visitors and imperial envoys, debated matters of common concern, and sacrificed to the guardian spirit of the place. In it lay the true religion of the Vietnamese and the most vivid expression of the soul of the people, rather than in the imperial temples, or in those halls built in honour of Confucius in which litterati conducted their debates. The *dinh* generally comprised two parallel wings. The further back of these wings usually had an oblong recess with an altar to the Genius of the place in the middle. The roof was of the same type as that of the pagodas. These roofs are sometimes very beautiful, and

the opulence of the whole building is in strong contrast with the poverty of the private dwellings.

The art of the Nguyen

In his efforts to assure the unity of the country under the imperial house, Gia-long systematically took Peking and China as his models. The vast plan of the palace at Hue reflects this policy. Certainly the most beautiful

PLATE P. 227

building there is the Ngo-mon (southern) Gate surmounted by the Belvedere of the Five Phoenixes. A platform of violet tinted stone supports an elegant structure of gilt wood and glazed tiles, and the rhythm of the whole is worthy of the spirit of China. But it is above all the sense for landscape gardening which is the peculiar merit of the whole imperial quarter. We know how important geomantic considerations were for the placing of a tomb, a house, or a palace. Earthly and heavenly currents had to combine in a harmonious knot in the heart of the building, in order that who ever resided there should reap their benefit. The whole of Hue is layed out in response to these exigencies. Even on the horizon

FIG. 39

hills protect the gates from evil spirits. The imperial palace is a series of enclosures cunningly encasing the throne room which is the very heart of the Empire. In each court delightful gardens are replicas in microcosm, with rocks and miniature trees and tiny lakes, of the great world with

PLATE P. 230

its mountains, forests and limitless oceans. Architecture of this sort cannot be understood from the outside, or from the level of the ground. It must remain secret; to know and understand the plan of the palace would amount to taking magic possession of it. The imperial residence resembles an ideogram written by the Emperor, the Regulator of the World, on the ground for his own eyes and those of Heaven alone, for his powers are delegated from Heaven. The parade ground of Nam-giao, near Hue, where the Emperor celebrated the great annual sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, is laid out with the same aim, having alternately square and round terraces rising one above the other. Moreover all this belongs to the same circle of ideas familiar to us in the Khmer temple-mountain, the Thai ruler taking the place of the god-king. Indeed one could trace the conception further back to the *stupa,* ziggurat and pyramid.

The imperial tombs at Hue faithfully copy those of the Ming, but fall far short of them in execution. Their fine lay-out is always the most impressive past. A great enclosure contains a park of rare trees; after that comes an avenue lined with statues of servants, ministers, guardian spirits and favourite horses, leading up to the pavillion containing the funeral stele; then comes the temple for the cult of the dead emperor; and finally there is the tomb under a huge round tumulus guarded by a crescent of water. The same taste for town planning recurs, but in a much more practical context, in the great cities fortified by French engineers, who were disciples of Vauban, for Gia-long and his successors. Some have a square plan; for instance Hue (1805) and Son-tay (1822). Others have the jagged polygonal plan characteristic of French fortresses; for

instance Thanh-hoa (1804), Bac-ninh (1824 to 1845), and Vinh (1831). It may seem that Vietnamese art has been here somewhat neglected. Whatever its merits (and its original creations have been recognised) and however much our judgment may be limited by the scarcity of material, it is nevertheless true that the political organisation and the literature were never more than mediocre reflections of that of China. Its art, therefore, does not deserve the attention due to that of the original civilisations which grew up in Indochina.

THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEANS

The capture of Malacca by Alfonso de Albuquerque in 1511 marks the beginning of European penetration in Asia, and it was due to the same motives which had led to the Indian expansion fifteen centuries earlier, namely the search for luxury goods. For the first time the names of Siam

Mèn temporary construction for a Buddhist cremation. Siemreap, Cambodia. Contemporary art: 1959. *Wood, bamboo, paper and painted cloth.*

and Cambodia appeared in European writings and on maps, and descriptions of Ayuthya and Angkor soon followed. However the activities of the Europeans did not affect Indochina directly, as they were concentrated partly on Indonesia and partly on China and Japan. Only Spaniards from Manilla tried by armed force to establish their missionaries in Cambodia. A series of expeditions during the last quarter of the 16th century ended in disaster. The same fate befell the French expeditions to Siam a century later. Only a few Dutch, French and English merchants carried on in this country. The Roman Catholic religion failed completely there and everywhere else where it challenged Theravada Buddhism. Only in Tonkin did a few seeds succeed in germinating. 18th century Jesuit missionaries endowed this country with a way of writing their language in Latin letters. Till then, it could only be written by litterati with a Chinese education, and this Jesuit system was to become the one accepted by the nation. At the end of the 18th century Gia-long's French advisers introduced into Vietnam many elements of western technology, which made no small contribution to the political success of the country. Down to our own day it is only in Tonkin that the Roman Catholic religion has converted any considerable part of the population.

It was not until the French were established in eastern Indochina, and the British in Burma, that the peninsula really came under European influence. Then the ancient intellectual and social structures were confronted by a totally different civilisation. As yet Indochina has only lived through the beginning of that experience.

Historically, perhaps, the most important fact is that the arrival of the Europeans coincided with other movements of civilisation. From the 13th century the Arabs, for the same commercial reasons as the Indians, parts of whose land they had just conquered, spread from Sumatra over the whole of Indonesia. They also founded a series of Islamic sultanates in Malaya. The Dutch, and then the English, followed on their heels. In this way the extreme corner of Indochina was cut off from the continent, and its fate became linked with that of Indonesia and the mastery of the seas. It is a characteristic fact showing how the Cham felt, that the few survivors of this race in southern Indochina were the only ones among all the peoples of the peninsula to be converted to Islam.

Great importance must be attached to the Chinese colonies which had been growing ever since the 14th century. These colonies rapidly grew to considerable stature with the advent of large scale international trade by sea, a development favoured by the first Ming emperors, and immensely expanded by the Europeans with their techniques of navigation. The links between these Chinese colonies covered all the eastern seas. When they in their turn have adopted western political and industrial techniques, they will become one of the decisive factors in the evolution of this part of the world. In the wide perspective of history it may be that

Mên temporary construction for a Buddhist cremation. Vientiane, Laos. Contemporary Laotian art: 1959. *Wood, bamboo and paper.*

the main result of the comparatively short European domination, was the elimination of the last traces of Indian and Islamic influence in south east Asia, which left the field clear to the Chinese and Japanese when they had learnt western techniques.

The end of the national arts

The arts of Europe had but little influence in Indochina. We have mentioned in passing the adoption of geometrical perspective in painting, and of details of technique. One might add the part played by French engineers in the building of, for example, the palace of Phra Narai at

Lopburi and the fortified cities of Vietnam. There used to be royal pleasure-houses in Cambodia whose decoration derived from the style of Louis XV, and inspiration from the same source appears in the decoration of some pagodas. But such cases were very rare and have no significance. By the same token, Chinese art played a much more considerable part during the same period, and so did Islam by introducing its goldwork and its textiles into Malaya.

The arts of Indochina are dead because the societies which expressed themselves through them have broken up. We have seen how Vietnam expanded and attained unity, but turned to the art of imperial China to express the new order, and renounced Buddhist traditions. On the contrary, the art of Siam in the Bangkok period shows that a certain political vitality still existed. Finally the ancient cultures of Indochina vanished on contact with the West, at the same time as the societies in which they still survived broke up. The new masters did nothing to suppress these traditions. On the contrary their historical researches uncovered the past and brought it into honour again. But one cannot prolong an aesthetic tradition which is unwanted by a society. Only the Buddhist lands continued along the same path, for their religion and their art were not so directly linked with political power. At the beginning of the 20th century the Cambodians, for example, were still endowed with an incomparable plastic sense. This stands out particularly clearly on the occasions of great royal or religious cremations. Then they construct *men,* which are temporary erections to surround the funeral pyre. Made of bamboo, painted stuff, cut-out paper and the carved trunks of banana trees, these ephemeral constructions are notable for their purity of line and richness of decoration. The same is true in Laos on similar occasions. The storeyed canopy surmounting the coffin is nothing but the last echo of the sacred mountain, and of the *stupa,* a miniature replica of the universe, by which means the dead man is able to ascend to heaven. Thus down to our day the fundamental feature of the thought of the country is maintained, and is expressed by an art which is part of their rites.

PLATE P. 233

PLATE P. 235

APPENDIX

PRONUNCIATION

A simplified transcription has been used to avoid embarrassing the general reader with diacritical marks which he does not understand, but which the specialist can easily insert for himself. The following notes will give a rough guide to pronunciation.

CONSONANTS

All consonants are clearly pronounced, especially the final ones. Thus Bayon as Jo*hn*, Jayavarma*n* as ma*n*, and Base*t* as se*t*.

Ch as in *ch*ief.

J with emphasis and slightly palatalised, especially at the beginning of words, as in *J*ohn.

Sh as in *sh*ame.

V and *W* are soft diphthongs like the English *w*att.

H is always pronounced.

VOWELS

A as in l*a*rk.

E like the "a" in *a*ce.

I as in t*i*p.

O as in d*o*g.

U like the "oo" in f*oo*l.

NAMES OF THE MONUMENTS

Although in Cambodia the ancient names of most of the monuments are known from inscriptions, there is a general agreement to use the modern names which the first explorers learnt from their Cambodian guides before they could decipher the writing. These names moreover, sometimes keep ancient traditions alive.

angkor from the Sanscrit *nagara*, "The royal city" or "capital".

Asram Maha Rosei, from the Sanscrit *asrama maha rishi:* "The hermitage of the great ascetic".

nokor, same etymology as *angkor*, "The royal city" or "capital".

Phimeanakas, from the Sanscrit *vimana akasa*, "The celestial palace", which meant the palace of the kings of Angkor.

Preah Vihar, from the Sanscrit *brah vihara*, "The holy monastery".

Pre Rup, "To turn over the corpse", part of a funeral rite of cremation for which the sanctuary may have been used.

Names often begin with *ba* and *me* which meant "father" and "mother" in the Mon-Khmer language. It seems that the Cambodians used the former for temple-mountains representing the earth, e.g. Ba-kheng, Ba-kong, Ba-phuon and Ba-yon; and the latter for temples consecrated to the worship of the waters, e.g. the Me-bon at Angkor. Many other sanctuaries have modern Cambodian names referring to legendary gods or heroes, which have some connection with their origin, e.g.

Beng Mealea: "The Pool of Mealea" which is the modern name of Suryavarman, the probable founder of the temple.

Chau Srei Vibol: "The eminent and glorious Lord", name of a temple which is very probably a private foundation, not a royal one.

Preah Khan: "The sacred Sword", for a temple erected after Jayavarman VIIth's victory over the Cham, as we know from the original inscription.

Ta Keo: "The ancestor Keo"; Ta Nei: "The ancestor Nei"; Ta Prohm: "The ancestor Brahma", which is a frequent element in the names of temples, referring either to the chief divinity worshipped there, or to a popular cult connected with it.

Most of the modern names are purely descriptive, referring to some local detail or chance characteristic of the sanctuary. To help to fix these strange names in the memory we give the commonest of them:

Angkor Thom, "The great capital".

Angkor Vat, "The capital which (has become) a Buddhist monastery (vat)".

Baksei Chamkrong, "The brooding bird".

Banteay Chmar, "The narrow citadel".

Banteay Kdei, "The citadel of the cells".

Banteay Prei Nokor, "The citadel of the forest of the capital".

Banteay Samre, "The citadel of Samre" (peasants and, by extension, backwood peoples).

Banteay Srei, "The citadel of the women".

Khleang, "The royal treasure".

Kompong Preah, "The village of the holy ones".

Kompong Svay, "The village of the mango fruit".

Neak Pean, "The curled up snakes". (The old form "Nirpean" (Nirvana) would be preferable).

Phnom Kulen, "The hill of the letchi trees" *(dimocarpus crinitus)*

Prasat Damrei Krap, "The shrine of the kneeling elephant".
Prasat Kravanh, "The shrine of the *kravanh* tree" (*amomum cardamomum*).
Prasat Neang Khmau, "The shrine of the dark lady".
Preah Ko, "The holy bull".
Prei Kmeng, "The forest of the child".
Prei Monti, "The forest of the palace".
Prei Prasat, "The forest of the shrine".
Rup Arak, "The statue of the Genius".
Trapeang Phong, "The marsh in which one gets caught".

In Siam the following expressions are commonest in the names of the temples:

Maha, "great".
Phra, "holy, venerable".
Prang, "temple".
That, "*stupa*".
Wat, "Buddhist monastery". Thus, Wat Mahathat, "Monastery of the great *stupa*": Prah Prang, "The holy shrine". Naturally monasteries still functioning have erudite names usually referring to some episode in the life of the Buddha.

We also add a more general list of the commonest elements in place names found in this book:

Abbreviations: c: Cambodian
m: Malayan
p: Pali
sc: Sanscrit
t: Thai
v: Vietnamese

ban, t: village.
banteay, c: from the sc. *pandaya?:* fortress.
beng, c.: pool.
buri, t.: from the sc. *puri;* holy town.
chandi, m.: temple, funerary shrine.
damrei, c.: elephant.
gua, m.: cave.
koh, c.: island.
kompong, c.: from the m. *kampong;* inhabited district; village.
kota, m.: fort; fortified village.
krol, c.: pen for cattle, corral.
kuala, m.: estuary, tributary.
kuk, c.: hillock.
luang, luong, t.: honorific title; chief, lord; by extension, the eminent.
muong, t.: territorial district roughly corresponding to a province; feudal fief.
nakhon, t.: from sc. *nagara*: capital, royal town.
neang, c.: lady.
phnom, c.: little hill.
phum, c.: from sc. *bhumi:* village.
prasat, c.: from sc. *prasada:* sanctuary.
prah, t. preah, c.: holy, august.
prei, c.: forest.
puri, pura, sc.: city, holy town.
sri, t., srei, c.: from sc. *sri:* beauty; fortune; majesty.
sras, c., from sc. *saras:* pool (in a pagoda or a temple).
sungei, m.: river.
svay, c.: mango (*mangifera Indica*).
ta, c.: the ancestor, the old man
tengku, m.: honorific title; prince.
thom, c.: great.
trapeang, c.: pool.
ulu, m.: head; hilt; upper part.
vat, c.; wat, t.: from p. *vatthu:* Buddhist monastery.

THE NAMES OF THE KINGS

In Cambodia and Champa the kings bear innumerable names and titles in their inscriptions, and these change with the phases of their lives, not to mention their posthumous names. So it has been agreed to employ the most commonly used name. The ordinal numbers after some of these names have been added by modern historians to distinguish monarchs of the same name. Most of these names, of sanscrit derivation, end with *varman*, which means "armour", and so "the (One) protected (by)", e.g.:

Bhadravarman, "The man protected by luck".
Bhavavarman, "The man protected by Bhava" (literally "The life", a name for Siva).
Dharanindravarman, "The man protected by Indra (the lord) of the earth (*dharani*)".
Harivarman, "The man protected by Hari" (literally "the wild beast", a name for Indra and Vishnu).
Harshavarman, "The man protected by luck".
Indravarman, "The man protected by Indra".
Jayavarman, "The man protected by victory".
Narasimhavarman, "The man protected by the great (*maha*) Indra".
Narsimhavarman, "The man protected by the Man- (*nara*) lion (*simha*)", a name for Vishnu.
Rajendravarman, "The man protected by king (*raja*) Indra".

Rudravarman, "The man protected by Rudra (i.e. "The Terrible", a name of Siva).

Sambhuvarman, "The man protected by Sambhu", a name for Siva, Vishnu, Indra and even for Brahma.

Udayadityavarman, "The man protected by the rising (*udaya*) sun (*aditya*)".

GLOSSARY OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TECHNICAL TERMS

Abbreviations: c.: Cambodian
p.: Pali
sc.: Sanscrit
t.: Thai
v.: Vietnamese

apsaras, sc.: goddesses and heavenly dancers inhabiting paradise.

baray, c.: artificial lake.

Bodhisattva, sc.: a Being on the way to the highest Enlightenment. In Mahayana Buddhism, a Being who has put off his own admission to Enlightenment in order to help others to find the way.

caitya, sc.: a commemorative monument, usually funerary or containing holy relics.

chedei, c.; *chedi,* t.: from sc. *caitya:* a Buddhist reliquary shrine.

chua, v.: Buddhist temple.

garuda, sc.: mythical bird, the enemy of snakes (*naga*); Vishnu's mount.

grylloi (Greek): fantastic mixtures of man and beast.

kala, sc.: literally "blue-black", mythical monster, demon.

linga, sc.: phallus; symbol of Siva, Lord of the World, in the form of a column, and of Siva, Creator of the World, in the form of a phallus.

makara, sc.: sea monster, inspired by the crocodile and the sea-lion.

mandapa, sc.: tent, canopy or light pavilion: the place where an idol is housed.

men, t., sc. *meru:* place, consecrated for funeral rites.

naga, sc.: mythical snake, earth *genius;* generally represented as a cobra (*naja naja*), although in South east Asia it is only the equivalent of the Chinese "dragon".

nandi, sc.: bull, Siva's mount.

phi, t.: spirit, protecting spirit; *phi muong:* guardian spirit of the *muong,* a feudal district of the Thai.

prang, t.: temple.

stupa, sc.: Buddhist funeral monument in the form of an earth mound, surrounded by a fence, and surmounted by a finial.

that, t., from sc. *dhatu:* relic, *stupa.*

torana, sc.: gate in an enclosing wall or in a palisade.

ushnisha, sc.: turban; chignon on the head of a Buddha.

vihara, sc.: monastery.

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	GEOLOGICAL PERIODS		EUROPE	MIDDLE EAST	INDI
				Alexander the Great 356–323	
400			Socrates	Xerxes	Buddha 5
			Pericles		
500				*Persian conquests*	
			Dracon	Assurbanipal	
			Homer	David	**Vedic I**
1 000			HALSTATT		
			Dorians	Ramses II	
		HOLOCENE	*Achaeans*	*Babylon*	
1 500				*Hyksos*	
			KNOSSOS	Irsin-Larsa	
				UR	*Arya*
2 000			AEGEAN	*Gizeh: Pyramids*	HARAPI
				Dynasties of Agade	
				DJEMDET-NASR	MOHENJO
3 000				URUK	HARAPI
			NEOLITHIC	EL-OBEID	
				TEL-HALAF	NUND
				SIALK	
4 000					
					Langh
5 000			MESOLITHIC		MICROL
				GLACIATIONS	
10 000			UPPER		
12 000		UPPER	Mousterian	ALPS / HIMALAYA	
			Levalloisian	WÜRM / G 5	LAT
					SOHAN
100 000				G 4	
	PLEISTOCENE		Acheulian	I. G. 3	
		MIDDLE			SOHANI
				RISS / G 3	
300 000				I. G. 2	SOHANI
400 000				MINDEL / G 2	Pre-SOH
500 000			LOWER		
		LOWER	Clactonian		
600 000			Abbevillian	GÜNZ / G 1	
			PALAEOLITHIC		

[A	SIAM	CAMBODIA LAOS	MALAYA
		First contacts with India	
58–478		**Southern Dongsonia**	
		Cent Rues	
	Roi Et	Xieng Khouang	Klang
		Tran Ninh	Perak
		MEGALITHIC CULTURE	
ndia	Lopburi	Samrong Sen	
	Ratburi	Long Prao	Tembeling
		Luang Prabang	Kedah
	Kwei Noi	Mlu Prei	Perlis
	Kwei Yai		Kelantan
as			*Deutero and Proto-Malaya*
PA H			
DARO			**NEOLITHIC**
PA II			
			Expansion of the Indonesians
ARA	Ban Khao	Sam Neua	Kelantan
			Expansion of the Melanesians
naj			
ITHS			*Expansion of the Australoids*
			MESOLITHIC
E			
IAN		CHOPPERS	
AN II			**MIDDLE PALAEOLITHIC**
	FINGNOIAN?		
AN I			
NIAN	ANYATHIAN II	?	TAMPANIEN I
	ANYATHIAN I		
			UPPER PALAEOLITHIC

INDONESIA	VIETNAM	CHINA	
	Chinese expansion		
Southern Dongsonia	DONGSONIAN	Warring States	400
Galœmpang	Lao-kay		
	Yen-bay		500
MEGALITHS of Sumatra		Chou	
	Quang-ngai		
	Sa-huynh		1 000
		Shang-Yin	
Lenticular Axe	Bau-tro		1 500
	Minh-cam	Pan-shan	
Quadrangular Adze		Ma-ch'ang	
		Lung-shan	2 000
		Yang-shao-ts'un	
TOALIAN			3 000
SAMPUNGANIAN	BAC-SON	NEOLITHIC	
	HOA-BINH		
SUMATRALITHS		Lin-hsi	4 000
		MICROLITHIC OF THE SANDS	5 000
		Tse-yang	10 000
			12 000
TJABENGE		ORDOS CULTURE	
Homo wadjakensis	Lang vanh ?	Sjara-Osso-gol	
		Shui-tung-kou	100 000
SANGIRANIAN			
Homo soloensis		Ting-t'sun	300 000
PATJITANIAN	?		
		Chou-k'ou-tien	400 000
		Sinanthropus Pekinensis	500 000
Pithecantropus			600 000

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART I

	INDIA	WESTERN INDOCHINA		
400			Perak	S
			Klang	
300	322–289 **Maurya**		Tengku Lembu	
	264–226 Asoka			
200			Tembeling	
	168–145 Menander			
100	176–64 **Sunga**			
	Saka invasions			
0				
	Kushana	*Indian expansion*		
100				
	Kanishka	**BURMA**	**MALAYA**	
200				
	Sassanid invasions	Pyu Kingdoms	Kingdoms of **Lankasuka** and of **Tambralinga**	
300	**Gupta**			
	335–375 Samudragupta			
400	414–455 Kumaragupta			*Kuala Selingsi*
	Huns invasions	*Buddhism at Prome*		*Buddha from*
		Pagan and Tathon	Kuala Selingsing	
500	**Chalukya**			
		Moza		
			Kingdoms of **Kamalanka**, **Tch'e-Tou** and **Touen-Siun**	**Dvaravati**
600	606–647 Harshavardhana	Kingdom of **Sriksheta**		
	Pallava			**Haripunjaya**
		Prome		
700	**Rachtrakuta**		**EMPIRE OF SRIVIJAYA**	
		Ha-lin		
	Pala	Kingdom of **Nan-Tchao**	*Mahayana Buddhism*	
800	**Pratihara**			
		Rise of Pagan	*Indian colonies*	**Dvaravati**
	Apogee of the Pala	*Foundation of Pegu*		
900				

CENTRAL INDOCHINA

SOUTHERN DONGSONIAN

Roi Et

Lamp from Pong Tuk

Samrong Sen
Cent-Rues

Bronze from Tra-vinh

DONG-SON

Indian expansion

EMPIRE OF FU-NAN

225–243 Fan Tchan
243–287 Fan Siun

FU-NAN ART
Oc-eo

357 Tchan–t'an

400–420 Kaundinya
484–514 Jayavarman
514–539 Rudravarman

PHNOM DA Style A

192 K'iu-lien
270 Fan Hiong
284 Fan Yi
340 Fan Wen

Bhadravarman
420–436 Yang Mah
Chinese attacks

Buddhas from Khorat, Pong Tuk, Phra Pathom

SIAM

Srideb
Sculptures from Sri Maha Pot, Pechaburi

CHEN-LA

550 Bhavavarman
600 Chitrasena
616–635 Isanavarman
636–656 Bhavavarman II
657–681 Jayavarman I
division of Chen-La

PHNOM DA Style B
SAMBOR Style
PREI KMENG Style
PRASAT ANDET Style
KOMPONG PREAH Style

530–572 Rudravarma
572–629 Sambhuvarm
Chinese attacks
653–686 Prakasadhar

Javanese raids

Javanese raids

EMPIRE OF ANKOR

802–850 Jayavarman II
Angkor centre of the country
877–889 Indravarman
Roluos capital
889–900 Yasovarman
Angkor capital

KULEN Style
PREAH KO Style
BAKHENG Style

Buddhist art at DVARAVATI
Pra Pathom
San Chao

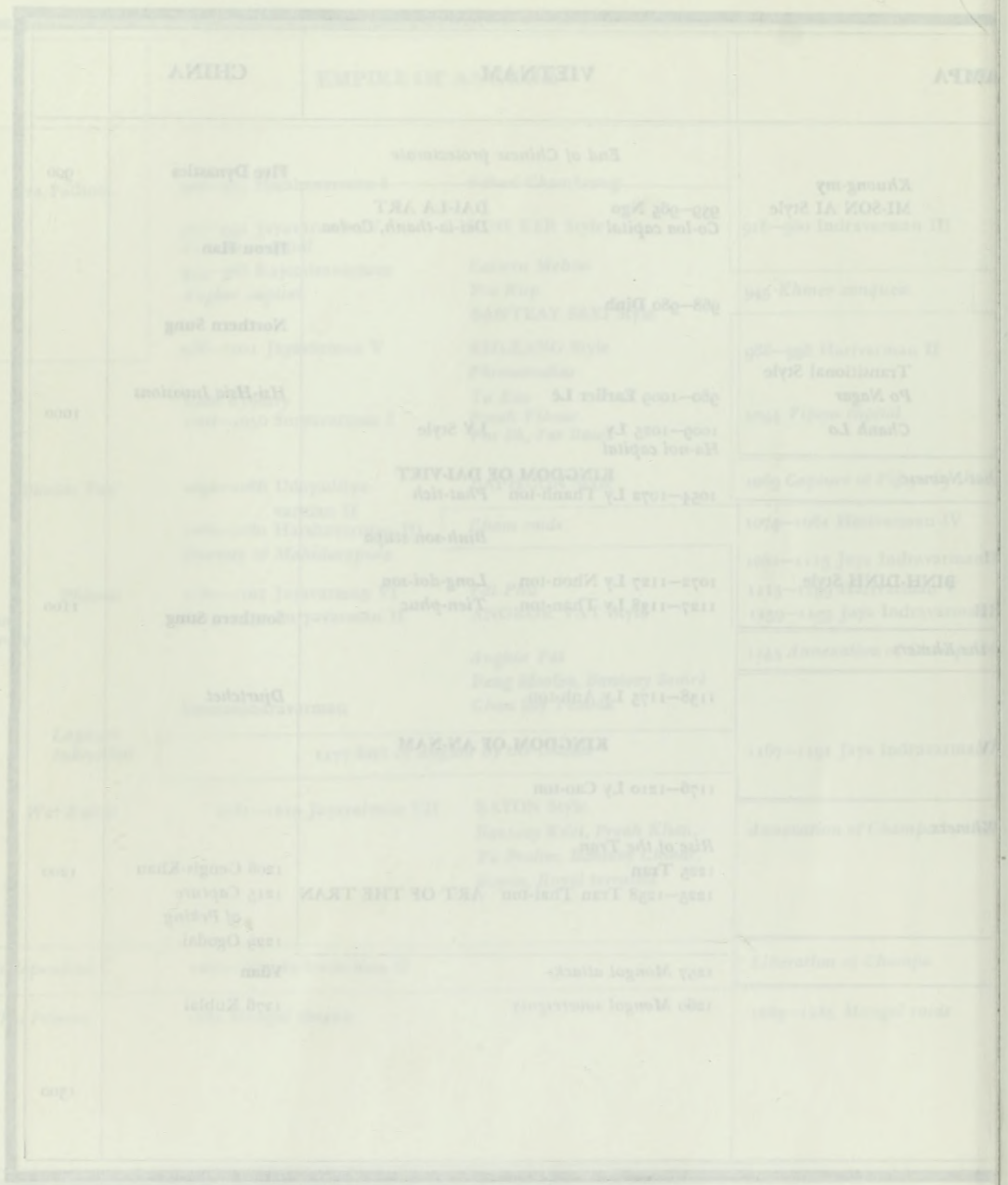
Dynasty of Indrapura
875–898 Indravarman

EASTERN INDOCHINA		CHINA	
	DONG-SON	**Warring States**	400
ynh			300
	257–208 Kingdom of **Au-Lac** *Chinese expansion*	**Ch'in** **Former Han**	200
	CHIAO-CHI		100
	111 *annextion by the Chinese* 43 *rebellion of the Trung Sisters*	**Later Han**	0
	PROVINCIAL CHINESE ART		100
	197 *Province of Chiao*		200
from Dong-duong	*cham raids*	**Three Kingdoms**	300
	cham raids		400
tion of Mi-son	*cham raids*	**Six Dynasties**	
			500
	541–548 *Ly-Bon's revolt* 602 *Suppression by the Sui*	**Sui**	600
MI-SON E I	**Protectorate of An-Nam**	**T'ang**	
	722 *Revolt of Mai-Thuc-Loan*		700
	767 *Dai-La, capital* DAI-LA ART	*Turks*	
Damrei Krap AI Style -DUONG Style	791 *Revolt of Do-Anh-Han*		800
		Five Dynasties	900

	INDIA	BURMA	MALAYA	
900	**Chola**		**SRIVIJAYA EMPIRE**	**Dvaravati**
		931 So-rahan		*Khmer influe*
				Haripunjaya
		Sokkate		
1000	985—1014 Rajaraja 998—1030 Mahmud of Ghazni	*Chola Raids*		*Khmer domina*
		Airlanga		
		1044—1077 Anoratha		
1100	Vikramaditya	1084—1112 Kyanzittha	*Khmer Domination over*	*Lopburi and La conquered by th*
	Sena and Hoysala	1113—1167 Alaungsithu	*Chaiya and Ligor*	1150 Adityaraja
	1186 Mahmud of Ghor	1173—1210 Narapatisithu		1213 Sabbadisidd
		Singhalese Buddhism		
1200	1202 Fall of Benares 1206 **Mamelokes**		*End of Khmer domination*	
		1254—1286 Narathihapate		*Sukhothai and L*
		1287 *Capture of Pagan by the Mongols*	*End of domination of Srivijaya*	1287 *Alliance of t*
1300	*Muslims in the Dekkan*			

AM	EMPIRE OF ANGKOR		CHAMP
C			
Pra Pathom	900—921 Harshavarman I	*Baksei Chamkrong*	
	921—941 Jayavarman IV *Koh Ker capital*	KOH KER Style	918—960 Indravarman III
	944—968 Rajendravarman *Angkor capital*	*Eastern Mebon* *Pre Rup* BANTEAY SREI Style	945 *Khmer conquest*
	968—1001 Jayavarman V	KHLEANG Style *Phimeanakas*	988—998 Harivarman II
	Solar dynasty 1002—1050 Suryavarman I	*Ta Kèo* *Preah Vihear* *Vat Ek, Vat Baset*	1044 *Vijaya capital*
Panom Van	1050—1066 Udayaditya-varman II	BAPHUON Style	1069 *Capture of Vijaya by the*
	1066—1080 Harshavarman III *Dynasty of Mahidarapura*	*Cham raids*	1074—1081 Harivarman IV
			1081—1113 Jaya Indravarman
Phimai	1080—1107 Jayavarman VI	*Vat Phu*	1113—1139 Harivarman V
Khmers	1113—1150 Suryavarman II	ANGKOR VAT Style	1139—1145 Jaya Indravarman
		Angkor Vat	1145 *Annexation of Champa by the*
	Dharanindravarman	*Beng Mealea, Banteay Samrè* *Chau Say Tevoda*	
Lopburi *Sukhothai*	1177 *Sack of Angkor by the Chams*		1167—1191 Jaya Indravarman
Wat Kukut	1181—1219 Jayavarman VII	BAYON Style *Banteay Kdei, Preah Khan, Ta Prohm, Banteay Chmar, Bayon, Royal terrasses*	*Annexation of Champa by the*
independent	1220—1243 Indravarman II		*Liberation of Champa*
Thai Princes	1282 *Mongol threats*		1283—1285 *Mongol raids*

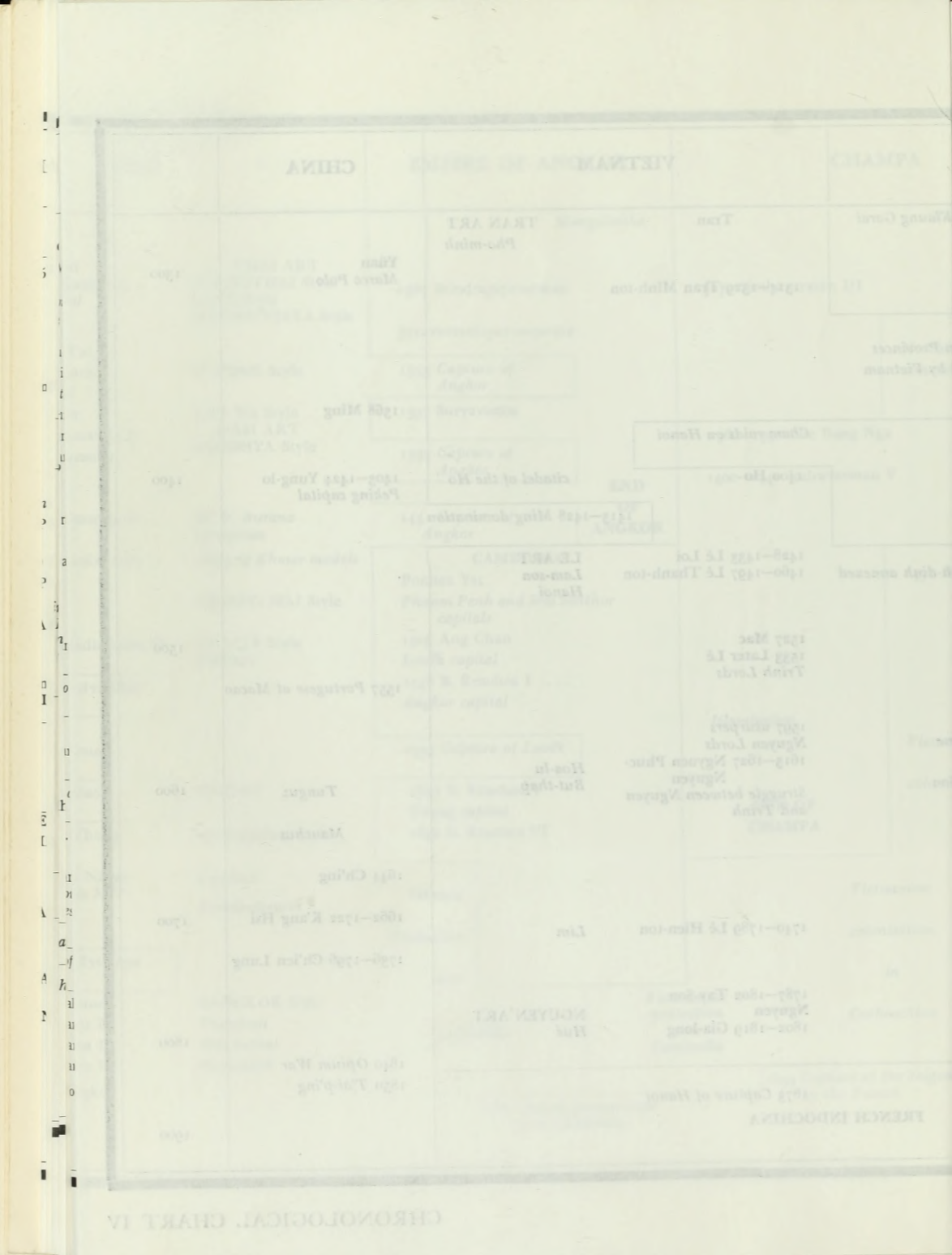
CHAMPA	VIETNAM		CHINA	
	End of Chinese protectorate		**Five Dynasties**	900
Khuong-my MI-SON AI Style	939–965 **Ngo** *Co-loa capital*	DAI-LA ART *Dai-la-thanh, Co-loa*		
			Heou Han	
	968–980 **Dinh**			
			Northern Sung	
Transitional Style *Po Nagar*	980–1009 **Earlier Lê**		*Hsi-Hsia Invasions*	
Chanh Lo	1009–1025 **Ly** *Ha-noi capital*	LY Style		1000
t-Namese	**KINGDOM OF DAI-VIET**			
	1054–1072 Ly Thanh-ton	*Phat-tich*		
		Binh-son stupa		
BINH-DINH Style	1072–1127 Ly Nhon-ton	*Long-doi-son*		
	1127–1138 Ly Than-ton	*Tien-phuc*		1100
ne Khmers			**Southern Sung**	
	1138–1175 Ly Anh-ton		*Djurtchet*	
	KINGDOM OF AN-NAM			
	1176–1210 Ly Cao-ton			
mers	*Rise of the Tran*			
	1225 **Tran**		1206 Gengis-Khan	1200
	1225–1258 Tran Thai-ton	ART OF THE TRAN	1215 *Capture of Peking*	
			1229 Ogodai	
	1257 *Mongol attacks*		**Yüan**	
	1260 *Mongol sovereignty*		1276 Kublai	
				1300

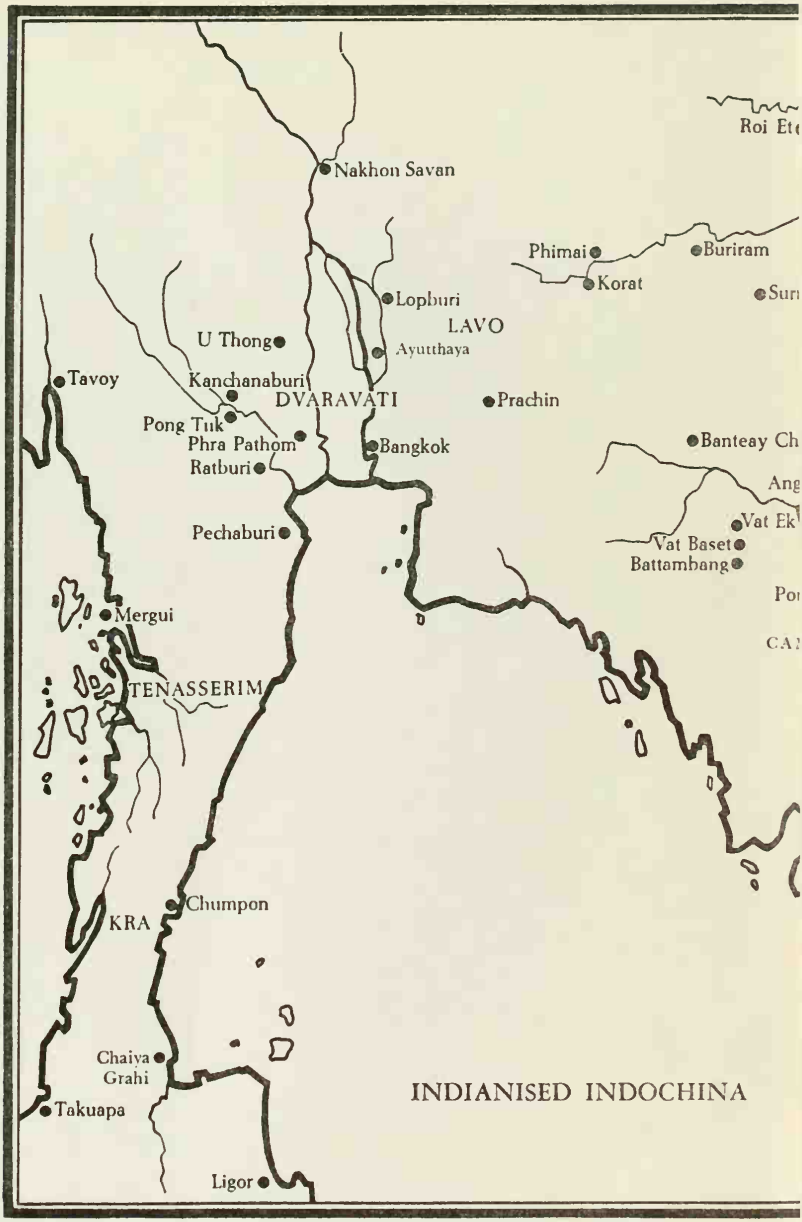


	INDIA	MALAYA	BURMA	
			Thais of Martaban	
1300	Sultanate of **Delhi**	*Thais at Ligor*	1292 Kyozwo 1312 *Thais at Pinya*	1296 Chieng Ma 1281–1310 R. K *Sukhothai capit*
	1351–1388 Firoz Shah	1350 *First islamic colonies*	1347 Burmese kingdom of **Taungu**	1347–1361 Lu T 1350 Ramadhip *Ayudhya capital*
			1364 Thai kingdom of **Ava**	1355–1385 Gun 1370–1388 Para
	1398 Timur			1388–1395 Ram
1400		1402 *Foundation of Malacca*		
				1424–1448 Para
		1444 *Malacca converted to Islam*		1448–1488 Trail
1500	1510 *Portuguese in Goa*	1511 *Portuguese at Malacca*		1491–1529 Ram
	VIJAYANAGAR	1529 Sultanate of **Johore**	1539 *Unified Burma*	1569 *Capture of*
	1560–1605 Akbar			1590–1605 Nar
1600	1605–1627 Jahangir			1615 *Burmese a*
			1628 Kingdom of **Pegu**	1630–1655 Pr. T
		1641 *Dutch at Malacca* *English factories*	1635 *Ava capital* 1658 *Chinese raids*	1656–1688 Phra *Embassy of Lou* *Dutch factories*
1700	1741 Dupleix		1740 *Pegu independent* Alaungpya	1766 *Capture of*
			1770 *Manchu raids*	1767–1782 Tak
	1780 *English in Ceylon*	*English at Kedah*		1782–1806 Ran
1800		1795 *English at Malacca*		1806–1824 Ran
		Stamford Raffles	1824 *Capture of Rangoon*	1824–1851 Ran 1851–1868 Mo
			1885 *Capture of Mandalay*	
1900	**BRITISH EMPIRE**			

SIAM		EMPIRE OF ANGKOR		CHAMPA
		Mangalartha		
Mai	THAI ART			
Kamheng	SUKHOTHAI Style	1367 Srindrajayavarman		Jaya Simhavarman III
ital	LAVO Style			
	HARIPUNJAYA Style	Jayavarmadiparamesvara		
Tai				
ipathi	U TONG Style	1353 *Capture of Angkor*		*North* … *annex* …
tal				
ina	LAN NA Style	1357 Suryavamsa		
ramaraja I	SIAM ART			
imesuen	AYUDHYA Style			1360—1390 Che Bong Nga
		1393 *Capture of Angkor*		
				1400—1441 Indravarman V
			END OF ANGKOR	
ramaraja II	*W. R. Burana Lamphun*	1431 *Capture of Angkor*		
ailokanatha	*Copy of Khmer models*	**CAMBODIA**		
		Ponhea Yat		1471 …
	CHIENG MAI Style	*Phnom Penh and Srei Santhor capitals*		
madhipathi II	CHAIYA Style	1505 Ang Chan		
	Ratburi	*Lovêk capital*		
of Ayudhya		1556 B. Reachea I		
		Angkor capital		
				Islamisation
iresuen		1593 *Capture of Lovêk*		*Vietnam…*
attacks	*Phetburi*	1627 B. Reachea V		*colonisation*
		Udong capital		**END OF CHAMPA**
. Thong	NATIONAL Style	1642 B. Reachea VI		
ra Narai	*Lopburi*			
uis XVI		*Siamese*		*Vietnamese*
s	*Buddhaisawan*			
		Protection		*colonisation*
f Ayudhya		*over*		*in*
aksim	BANGKOK Style		*Vietnamese protection over Cambodia*	*Cochinchina*
ama I	*Thonburi*	*Cambodia*		
ama II	*Wat Suthat*			
ama III	*Pitsanulok*			
ongkut				1859 *Capture of the Saigon by the French*
		1863 *French protectorate over Cambodia*		

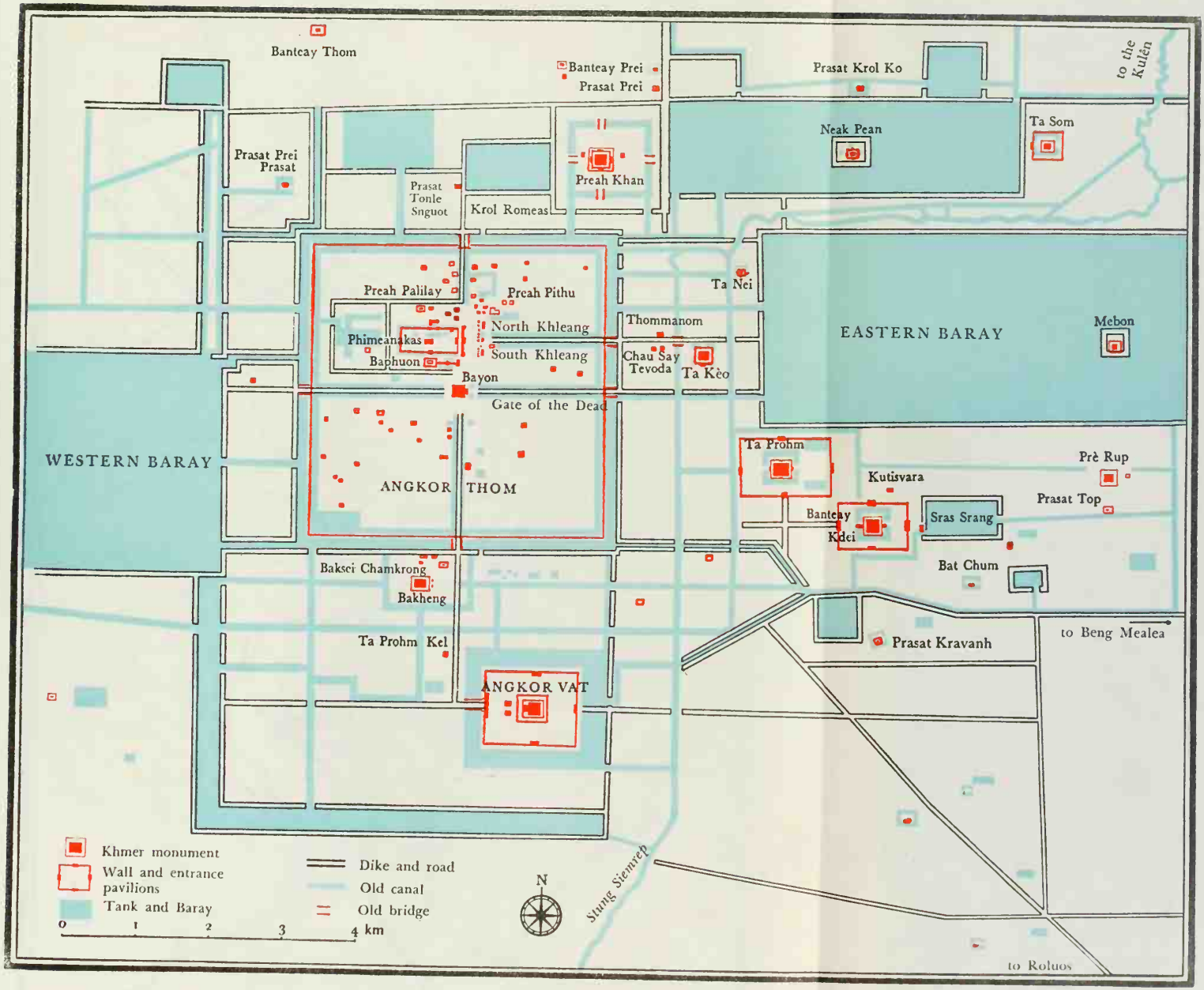
	VIETNAM		CHINA	
Po laung Garai	**Tran**	TRAN ART *Pho-minh*		
	1314–1329 Tran Minh-ton		**Yüan** *Marco Polo*	1300
North Provinces annexed by Vietnam				
			1368 **Ming**	
	Cham raids on Hanoi			
	1400 **Ho**	*citadel of the Ho*	1403–1424 Yung-lo *Peking capital*	1400
	1413–1428 *Ming domination*			
1471 *Bi-dinh annexed*	1428–1433 Lê Loi 1460–1497 Lê Thanh-ton	LE ART *Lam-son* *Hanoi*		
	1527 **Mac** 1533 **Later Lê** *Trinh Lords*			1500
			1557 *Portugese at Macao*	
Vietnese colonization	1597 *usurpers* *Nguyen Lords* 1613–1627 Ngyuen Phuc-Nguyen *Struggle between Nguyen and Trinh*	*Hoa-lu* *But-thap*	*Tunguz*	1600
			Manchus	
			1644 **Ch'ing**	
	1740–1789 Lê Hien-ton	*Lim*	1662–1722 K'ang Hsi 1736–1796 Ch'ien Lung	1700
	1787–1802 Tay-Son **Nguyen** 1802–1819 Gia-long	NGUYEN ART *Hué*		1800
			1840 *Opium War* 1850 *T'ai-p'ing*	
	1873 *Capture of Hanoi*			
	FRENCH INDOCHINA			1900




Roi Et
Nakhon Savan
Phimai
Buriram
Korat
Lopburi
LAVO
U Thong
Ayutthaya
Tavoy
Kanchanaburi
DVARAVATI
Prachin
Pong Tuk
Phra Pathom
Bangkok
Ratburi
Banteay Ch
Ang
Vat Ek
Pechaburi
Vat Baset
Battambang
Mergui
TENASSERIM
Chumpon
KRA
Chaiya
Grahi
Takuapa
Ligor
INDIANISED INDOCHINA

LAOS
Hué
Col of Clouds
Tourane
Bang An
Mi-son
Tra-kieu
Dong-duong
Khuong-my
AMARAVATI
U Bon
Bassak
Vat Phu
Sa-huynh
CHEN LA
Preah Vihear
Cheong Ksam
Thua-tien
Binh-dinh
Hung-thanh
Mlu Prei
Koh Ker
VIJAYA
Kulên
Nha-trang
Beng Mealea
Roluos
Preah Khan
CHAMPA
Prasat Andet
Sambor
Cape
Varella
Prei Kuk
Phum Prasat
Sambor
Samrong Sen
Nha trang
Kratie
KHAUTARA
Lovêk
Oudong
Banteay Prei Nokor
PANDURANGA
Hoa-lai
Srei Santhor
Po Klaung Garai
Phan-rang
Phnom Penh
Po Rome
Po Dam
Prei Veng
Ba Phnom
Pho-hai
Angkor Borei
Phnom Chisor
Saigon
Bien-hoa
Phnom Da
Thap-muoi
Bayang
FU-NAN
Oc-èo
Cent-Rues
Tra-vinh
Soc-trang

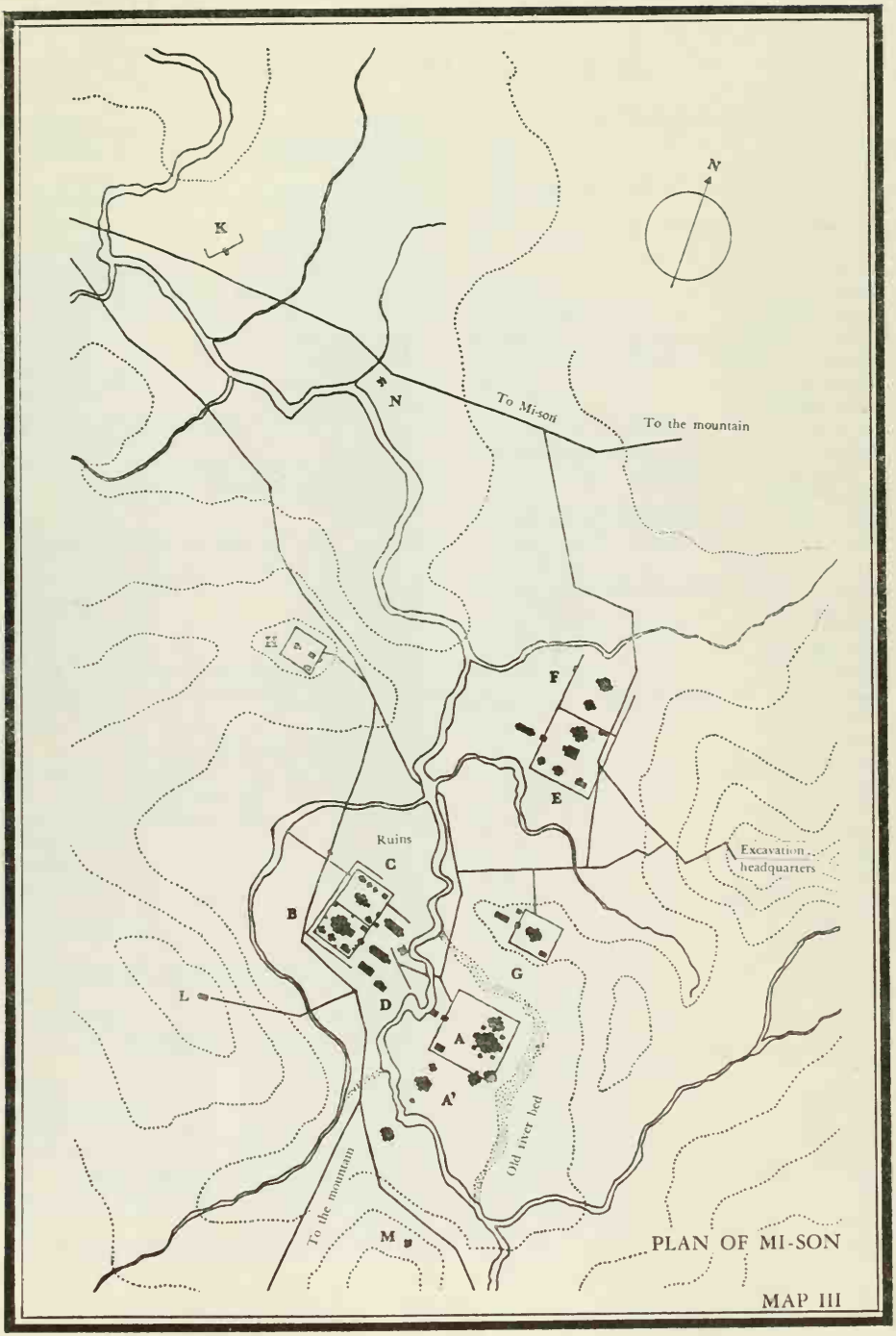
MAP I



PLAN O

ANGKOR

MAP II



PLAN OF MI-SON

MAP III

INDEX

Adiccarya 208
Africa 25, 49
Airlanga 151
Ak Yum 77, 78, 92, 98, 99, 110, 120
Albuquerque 233
Alexander the Great 49
Alexandria 48
Alor Star 82
Amaravati (Champa) 65
Amaravati (India) 48, 50, 60, 64
Amarendrapura, also see Ak Yum 90, 92
America 49
Anavatatapta 182
An-Duong-Vuong 41
Ang Chan 191
Angkor 10, 55, 70, 77, 87 et seq., 139 et seq., 168 et seq., 190, 191, 200, 204
Angkor Borei 60, 64
Angkor Thom 118, 123, 166, 173, 175, 177, 192
Angkor Vat 102, 120, 132, 151 et seq., 161, 194, 197, 203 et seq.
Annam 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28, 44, 51, 133, 152, 170, 226, 229
Anoratha 145, 151
Antoninus Pius 59
Anyathia 23
apsara 161, 164
Arabs 17, 234
Arikamedu 47
Asram Maha Rosei 73
Assam 17
Attic 59
Augustus 48
Au-Lac 41
Australia 13, 22
Australian Aborigines 25
Australoid 25, 26, 39
Austro-Asiatic 27
Austronesian 25
Avalokitesvara 71, 83, 89, 138, 141
Ayuthya 190, 204, 214 et seq.

Bac-ninh 45, 47, 149, 228, 233
Bac-son 26
Bacsonian 25, 26, 28
Bakheng 112, 113, 153
Bakong 96, 98 et seq., 112 et seq.
Baksei Chamkrong 110 et seq.
Bali 84, 189
Baling 28
Bang An 31
Bangkok 216, 221, 236
Bangkok Museum 68, 89, 164
Banhar 27
Ban Khao 26
Banteay Chmar 175
Banteay Kdei 173
Banteay Prei Nokor 90, 91
Banteay Srei 113 et seq., 125, 130
Baphuon 118, 120, 151, 152, 153, 157, 162, 164, 173, 185, 190
Baray of Lolei 95, 96
Baray, eastern 102, 109, 118, 166
Baray, western 78, 90, 120, 153
Barom Reachea I 191
Bassac 16, 53, 55, 69, 223
Bat Chum 109
Ba-Thê 59
Battambang 38
Bat-trang 149
Bayon 132, 147, 172, 173, 175, 180 et seq., 190, 206, 212
Bengal, bay of 19, 53
Beng Mealea 164, 166, 175
Bhadravarman 66, 80
Bhamo 17, 47, 204
Bhavavarman I 69
Bhavavarman II 76, 78, 82
Bhod Gaya 219
Bien-hoa 30
Binh-dinh 133, 143, 197
Binh-son 149
Black river 13
Blue river 15, 41
Bodhgaya 208, 219
Bodhisattva 77
Borneo 26, 40
Borobudur 88, 99, 172
Brahma 77, 109
Brahmin 48, 55, 71, 90, 94, 101, 115, 189, 190
British 234
Bronze Age 28 et seq., 66
Buddha 50, 55, 56, 60, 141, 166, 168, 187, 191, 214
Buddha Dipankara 48
Buddhism 48, 66, 118, 168, 192
Buddhist 47, 102, 152, 236
Buddhism, Hinayana 144, 145 et seq., 200, 203
Buddhism, Mahayana 47, 63, 71, 77, 78, 83, 89, 109, 138, 145 et seq., 170, 172, 187, 200
Buddhism, Theravada 63, 189, 190, 194, 210, 234
Bujang 60
Burma 11, 16, 17, 27, 53, 66, 144, 151, 170, 203, 234

Burmese 224
But-thap 228

Ca Mau, cape 53
Cambodia 15, 16, 18, 19, 38, 46, 53, 90, 151, 168, 194, 204
Cambodian 27, 28, 223, 226, 234, 236
Canton 43, 46, 206
Cao-bang 15
"Captive Water" 70, 95
Cardamums 54
Celebes 40
Cent-Rues 53
Ceylon 48, 50, 56, 144
chaitya 146
Chaiya 82, 89, 152, 219,
Cham 11, 18, 19, 27, 40, 45, 65, 89, 168, 172, 197, 200, 226
Champa 15, 19, 51, 55, 65 et seq., 80 et seq., 94, 110, 133 et seq., 151, 152, 170, 185, 191, 194, 203, 226, 234
Chandi Kalasan 88
Chan-lo 143
Chau Say Tevoda 166
Chau Srei Vibol 118, 123
Che Bong Nga 197, 226
Ch'en dynasty 80
Chen-la 15, 18, 55, 61, 65, 69 et seq., 87, 89, 94, 95
Chieng Mai 204, 206, 212, 219, 222, 224
Chieng Sen 204, 214, 219
China, Chinese 10, 11, 13, 17, 22, 27, 33, 34, 39 et seq., 52, 53–57, 60, 65 et seq., 69, 70, 80, 133, 136, 141, 147–149, 152, 159, 185, 189, 200, 203, 210, 212, 220, 221, 226–233
Chitrasena (Mahendravarman) 69
Chok Gargyar 106
Chola 51
Chong Pisei 63
Choppers 23, 25
Chou Ta-kuan 189
chua 229
Cochin China 16, 53, 56, 64, 82, 94, 226
Co-loa 41, 149
Col of Clouds 65, 197
Confucius, Confucian 44, 148, 231

Dai-la 149, 226
Dangrek mountains 16, 109
Dayak 26
Deogarh 61
Dharanindravarman II 152, 168
Dhyana 47
dinh 229–231
Dinh Tien-hoang 228
Djakarta, museum 38
Dong-duong 51, 135, 136 et seq., 146
Dong-son 15, 22, 28, 31, 33 et seq., 51, 53, 59, 229
Dong-tac 34
Dong-thuoc 26
Durban 49
Dutch 234
Dvaravati 68, 83, 118, 144, 146, 187, 190, 194, 203, 204, 206, 210

Ellora 61
Emerald Buddha 210
English 221, 234
Europeans 17, 46, 49, 51, 192, 226 et seq., 233, 234

Fa Ngoun 222
Fing Noi, Fingnoian 23
Formosa 27
Franciscans 192
French 221, 226, 234, 235
Fu-nan 16, 19, 33, 46, 53 et seq., 68 et seq., 89

Gandhara 59
Ganges 59, 182
garuda 99, 101, 113
Gautama (see Buddha)
Gia-long 226, 232, 234
Golden Towers 197
Govardhana (see Krishna)
Grahi 219
grylloi 59
Gua Cha 28
Gua Kerbau 26
Gua Musang 28
Guna 214
Gupta, post-Gupta 57, 60, 66, 68, 73, 146

Hai-nan 27, 40
Halstatt 32
Han 33, 43, 45
Han Chei 77
Ha-nam 149
Hanoi 13, 149, 197
Hanoi museum 33
Hari-Hara (see also Vishnu and Siva) 76, 77, 165
Hariharalaya, (Roluos) 90
Haripunjaya 204, 210, 214
Harivarman II 133
Harivarman IV 133, 151
Harivarman V 133, 197
Harshavarman I 106, 110
Harshavarman II 120
Hellenism, Hellenistic 33, 37, 49
Hevajra 187

Himalaya 27, 182, 203
Hinayana, (see Buddhism)
Hindu, Hinduism, (see also Brahma, Siva and Vishnu) 48, 50, 72, 83, 94, 166, 189, 200
Ho 227
Hoa-binh, Hoabinian 25, 26, 28
Hoa-lai style 136, 141
Hoa-lu 228
homo sapiens 25
homo soloensis 25
homo wadkakensis 25
Hue 232
"Hundred thousand" mountains 15
Hung thanh 197

Igorot 26
India, Indian, Indianisation 11, 15, 18, 20, 27, 39, 40, 46, 47—66, 68, 72, 82, 146, 164, 201
Indian Ocean 19
Indonesia, Indonesians 19, 22, 23, 26, 39, 87 et seq., 102, 135, 200, 234
Indra 90, 95
Indrapura (Champa) 133, 138 et seq.
Indrapura (Cambodia) 90
Indratataka 95
Indravarman I (Cambodia) 94 et seq., 109
Indravarman II (Champa) 133, 138
Indravarman III (Champa) 133, 143
Irawadi 13, 16, 145
Isanapura 69
Isananvarman 69, 71 et seq., 80
Islam 20, 189, 197, 200, 234, 236
Islamic 235
Ivory Towers 197

Japan 20, 234
Japanese 235
Jarai 26, 27, 200
Java, Javanese 23, 25, 27, 39, 66, 68, 80, 84, 87, 89, 91, 99, 151
Javanese art 92, 98, 99, 102, 138, 144
Jaya Harivarman I 197
Jaya Indravarman I 197
Jaya Indravarman II 133
Jaya Indravarman III 133
Jayavarman I 78
Jayavarman II 78, 87 et seq., 98, 106, 109, 136
Jayavarman III 91, 94
Jayavarman IV 106 et seq.
Jayavarman V 110 et seq., 120 et seq.
Jayavarman VI 151, 152, 153
Jayavarman VII 152, 168, 170 et seq., 197, 206
Jesuits 234

Kadai 27
kala 92
Kamara river 50
Kambuja, (see also Cambodia) 69
Kanchanaburi 25
Kanishka 55
Kao Pien 149
Kashmir 23
Kaundinya-Jayavarman 55, 56
Kaveripatinam 49
Kedah 28, 66
Kelantan 26, 28
Keo-phay 26
Kephren 157
Kha 223
Khao Phra Bat Noy 212
Khautara 65
Khleang 120 et seq.
Khmer 11, 16, 17, 27, 40, 53, 69—80, 87—133, 138, 151—187, 203, 204, 206, 210, 214, 217, 221
Khuong-my 141
Klang 38
Koh Ker 106, 109 et seq., 125
Koh Krieng 76
Kompong Cham 90
Kompong Preah 77, 92, 93
Kompong Svay 166, 170
Kompong Thom 28, 69, 73, 77, 79
Korat 51, 68, 70, 83, 152, 191, 204
Korea 45
Kota Tampa 25
Kra 53
Kracé 76
Krishna, (see also Vishnu) 61, 120, 159
Krol Ko 173
Krol Romeas 170
Krus Preah Aram Rong Chen 91
Kuala Selingsing 66
Kublai Khan (see also Mongol) 197
Kulên 91 et seq., 98, 135, 136
Kurukshetra 161
Kuti, Kutisvara 90
Kwang-si 203
Kwang-tung 203
Kwei Noi 28
Kwei Yei 28
Kyanzittha 151, 208

Lach-truong 34
Lac-y 45
Lakshamana 61
Lakshmi 76, 77, 113
Lakshmindralokesvara 138
Lamphun 152, 204, 208

Lam-son 228
Lang-cuom 26
Lang-kao 25
Lang-son 15
Lanka (see also Ceylon) 161
Lankasuka 66
Lan Na 204, 214
Lan Xang 222
Lao-kay 33
Laos 13, 15, 17, 26, 118, 203, 223, 224—236
Lavo (see also Lopburi) 204, 214, 216
Lê, Former 147
Lê, Posterior 226
Lê-Loi 226
Leper King 173, 182
Ligor 66, 89, 118, 144
Lim 45, 228
linga 69, 78, 80, 89, 90, 91, 99, 101, 112, 144, 210
Lin-yi 65
Lokesvara (see also Avalokitesvara) 172, 175, 187
Lolei 95—98
Long-doi-son 149
Lopburi 26, 118, 152, 204, 235
Louis XIV 151
Louis XV 236
Lovek 191, 192
Luang Prabang 26, 118, 204, 222—224
Lu Po-to 43
Lu Thai 204
Ly 147, 149
Ly-bon 43
Ly Nhon-ton 149
Ly King Thanh-ton 149

Madura 38
mahabharata 161
Mahayana, (see Buddhism)
Mahendraparvata 90
Mahendravarman Chitrasena 69
Mahidarapura 151
makara 75, 92, 104, 144
Malacca 233
Malaya 13, 16, 17, 19, 23, 26, 27, 28, 38, 66, 82, 84, 89, 152, 170, 234, 236
Malayan 27, 170, 215
Malayans, Deutero- 27
Malayans, Proto- 26
Malayo-Polynesian 27
mandapa 210
Mangalartha 190
Mangray 204
Manilla 234
Marco Polo 197
Marcus Aurelius 59
Malte-Brun 52
Mebon, eastern 109 et seq.
Mebon, western 120, 130, 164
Megaliths, Megalithic 30 et seq., 50
Mekong 13, 15, 16, 19, 55, 70, 191, 192, 203, 223, 226 (see also Bassac, Tonle Sap)
Melanesia 26
Melanesians 25, 26, 39
Mên 236
Me-nam 13, 16, 17, 66, 83, 144
Meru 72, 90, 91, 98, 103, 177
Mesolithic 25
Miao-Man 27
Ming 197, 220, 221, 226, 228, 232, 234
Minh-Hanh 228
Mi-son 11, 66, 69 et seq., 80, 135, 136, 141, 143, 197, 198
Mi-son A I style 133, 141
Mi-son E I style 82 et seq.
Mi-son G I 197
Mlu-prei 28
Mnong 27
Moi tableland 15
Mon 66, 68, 83, 144, 147, 204, 206, 207, 219
Mon Hon 27
Mon-Khmer 17, 27, 31, 53, 214, 223
Mongol 27, 197, 203, 220
Monsoon 53
Mountain, King of the 90
Mulmein Tavoy 66
Munda 27
Muong 35
Muong Sing 224
Musiris 49
My-duc 138

naga 55, 98, 99, 101, 113, 147, 177, 180, 191, 208, 214
Nagarjunikonda 48
Nagasena 55
Nai-Nan 27
Nakhon Pathom 51, 146, 206
Nakon Sri Thammarat 215
Nam-dinh 226
Nam-giao 232
Nan-chao 203, 210
nandi 75
Narasimhavarman I 84
Neak Pean 173, 181, 182
Negroes 25
Neolithic 25, 26, 27, 28
Ngandong 25
Nghi-ve 45
Ngoc-lu 34

Ngo-mon 232
Nguyen 226
Nguyen-Anh 226
Nguyen-Dien (see Gia-Long) 228
Nha-trang 65, 80, 89, 110, 143, 197, 198
Ninh-binh 228
Ninh-phuc 228
Nui-sam 57

Ocean, Churning of the 177 et seq.
Oceania 19
Oc-eo 57, 59, 60, 64, 66
Orissa 208
Oudong 192

Pacific ocean 13, 19, 39
Pagan 66, 146, 152, 204, 208
Pagoda 149, 217, 221—224, 226, 228, 236
Pahang 26
Pala 89
Palaces, Flying 76
Palaeolithic 23
Pala Sena 214
Palaung 27
Palembang 87
Pali 189
Pallava 56, 73, 84
Panamalai 73
Panduranga 65
Papuans 26
Paramaraja I 204
Paramaraja II 190, 206
Pechaburi 84
Pegu 146
Pekin 226, 232
Perak 25, 26, 66, 89
Perlis 28
Phan-rang 65, 80, 89
Phat-tich 149
Phetburi 219
Philippines 27, 40
Phimai 151 et seq., 170, 191, 206
Phimeanakas (see also Angkor Thom) 110, 118, 120 et seq.
phi muong 209
Phnom Bakheng 102 et seq.
Phnom Bayang 77, 82
Phnom Bok 102
Phnom Chisor 118
Phnom Da 60, 63, 67, 76, 79
Phnom Krom 100
Phnom Kulên 90
Phnom Penh 16, 38, 69, 191, 226
Phnom Penh museum 61, 66, 76, 77, 79, 164
Phnom Preah Vihear 77
Phnom Sandak 153
Pho-binh-gia 26
Pho-minh pagoda 226
Phra Nakhon Luong 217
Phra Narai 216, 235
Phra Pathom 66, 68, 83, 146
Phra Prang Sam Yot 206
Phra Sua Muong 206
Phuc-yen 41
Phu-nho-quan 26
pithecanthropus erectus 23
pithecanthropus robustus 23
Pitsanulok 212, 216, 221
Pleistocene 23
Pliny the Elder 49
Po Dam 136
Po Klaung Garai 198
Polonnaruva 208
Po Nagar 89, 110, 143, 197, 198
Pong Tuk 59, 66, 68, 83
Po Romé 198
Pontic 33
Por Loboeuk 131, 133, 164
Portuguese 192, 233
Poulo Condore 28
Pra Pathom 68, 83
Prachinburi 84
Prajnaparamita 175
Prakasadharma 80 et seq.
Prambanam 200
prang 210, 212, 216
Prasat Andet 77 et seq., 93
Prasat Damrei Krap 92, 136
Prasat Kok Po 92
Prasat Kravan 113
Prasat Neang Khmau 113
Prasat Phum Prasat 79
Prasat Prei Monti 96
Prasat Prei Prasat 91
Prasat Thleang 77
Prasat Thong 216, 217
Prasat Trapeang Phong 78, 92
Preah Khan (Kompong Svay) 166, 170, 173, 175, 177, 181
Preah Ko 96, 102
Preah Ko style 98, 101, 104, 115
Preah Palilay 166
Preah Pithu 166
Preah Theat Touch 73
Preah Vihear 109, 118, 123, 151, 153
Prei Kmeng style 77, 78, 82, 135
Pre Rup 109 et seq., 123
Prome 66

Proto-Thai 43
Ptolemaic 48, 59
Pyramid 90, 99, 232
Pyu 66, 144

Quang-binh 25, 28, 65
Quang-ngai 28
Quang-nam 65, 133

Rahal 106
Rajendravarman 109, 112
Rama 161
Ramadhipati 190, 204, 206
Rama Kamheng 204, 210, 212
ramayana 161
Ramesuen 190, 206
Ramesvara 61
Ratburi 26
Ravana 161
Ravana ka khai 61
Red river 13, 15, 16, 25
Rhadé 26, 27, 200
Roi Et 15, 69
Roluos 78, 90, 91, 94, 98
Roman 43, 48, 59
Roman Catholic 234
Rome 49, 56
Rudravarman 55, 61 et seq.
Rup Arak 92

Sabbadisiddhi 208
Sa-huynh 28, 31
Saigon 49
Saigon museum 51
Sailendra 68, 84 et seq., 99, 200
Sai-son 226
Sak river 217
Salwen 13, 16
Sambhuvarman 80
Sambor on the Mekong 76, 120
Sambor Prei Kuk 69, 71 et seq., 91, 112, 120, 133
Sambor style 64, 69 et seq.
Sam Neua 26
Samrong Sen 28, 38
San Chao 146
Sankara 94
San Phra Sua Muong 206
Sanscrit 50, 55, 66, 189
Sassanian 59
Sat Maha Prasada 208
Savankhalok 210, 212, 221
Scythian 55
Selangor 38
Semang 26, 27
Se Mun 15, 69
Senoi 25
Setthathirat 223
Seven Pagodas 17
Shamans 35
Shih-huang-ti 41
Siam 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 27, 28, 51, 94, 144 et seq., 153, 204, 233
Siam, gulf of 16, 53, 102
Siamese 191, 192
Siemreap 102, 153
Silenus 59
Silpa 219
Silver Towers 198
Si Maha Phot 84
sinanthropus pekinensis 23
Siva 55, 65, 69 et seq., 90 et seq., 104, 109, 120, 130, 164, 172, 189
Sivasoma 94
Six dynasties 149
Sogdiana 47
Sohanian 23
Song Sola Dynasty 113 et seq.
Son-tay 226, 232
Son-tho 64
Spaniard 234
Sras Srang 173
Sravasti 183
Srei Santhor 191
Srideb 68
Srivijaya 17, 22, 68, 69, 84 et seq., 221
Sri Vishnuvarman 66
Ssechuan 17, 46
Stoclet 61
Stung Roluos 95
Stung Sen 75
stupa 56, 141, 146, 149, 212, 217, 221, 223, 229, 236
Style, Ayuthya 216 et seq.
Style, Amaravati 50, 60, 64, 65
Style, Angkor Vat 152 et seq.
Style, Aurangabad 61
Style, Bakheng 102 et seq.
Style, Bangkok 221
Style, Banteay Srei 113 et seq.
Style, Baphuon 125 et seq.
Style, Bayon 172 et seq.
Style, Binh-dinh 143, 197, 198
Style, Chieng Sen 214, 219
Style, Deogarh 61
Style, Dong-duong 138 et seq.
Style, Ellora 61
Style, Gupta, post-Gupta 57, 60, 64, 73, 146
Style, Hoa-lai 136 et seq.
Style, Khleang 120 et seq.

Style, Koh Ker 112, 117
Style, Kompong Preah 77, 91 93
Style, Kulên 91 et seq., 135–136
Style, Lê 227
Style, Lopburi 206
Style, Ly 149
Style, Mi-son A I 136, 143, 197
Style, Mi-son E I 82
Style, Phnom Da A 60, 64
Style, Phnom Da B 63, 71
Style, Prasat Andet 78
Style, Preah Ko 98
Style, Prei Kmeng 76, 78, 80, 82, 89, 93, 135
Style, Sambor 64, 71, 73, 76
Style, Sukhothai 204, 210 et seq.
Style, U Thong 215, 216
Style, Warring States 33
Sui emperors 80
Sukhothai 204, 206, 210, 223
Sumatra 38, 53, 66, 87, 234
Sumatran 26
Sunda islands 47
Sung 45, 149
Sungei Batu Pahat 89
Surat 84
Suratthani 88
Surya 55, 71
Suryavarman I 118, 120, 123, 144
Surayavarman II 151, 152, 153, 161, 164, 166, 194
Svay Pream 91

Taiping museum 89
Ta Kèo (province) 73
Ta Kèo (temple) 118, 123 et seq., 173
Takuapa 83
Tamil 48, 56
Tampanian 23
Tamralipti 49
Ta Nei 173
T'ang 45, 80, 147, 149
Tao 148
Ta Prohm 173, 176
Ta Son 173
Tay-son 226
Tembeling river 28, 38
Tembralinga 66
Tengku Lembu 28
Terrace of the Leper King 173, 182
Terrace of the Elephants 185
Thai 15, 22, 27, 147, 190, 191, 194, 197, 200, 203 et seq., 232
Thai-Vietnamese Group 27
Thai early (see Proto-Thai)
Thanh-hoa 25, 32, 149, 152, 227, 228, 233
Thap-mam 197, 198
That Luang 223
Thaton 66
Theravada (see Buddhism)
Thien Phuc 226
Thommanom 166
Thonburi 221
Thua-thien 197
Tibet 16
Tibeto-Burmese 27
Tiloka 219
Time, Asiatic conception of 20, 21
Ton-duc 228
Tonkin 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 40 et seq., 64, 89, 149, 228, 229, 234
Tonkin, gulf of 15
Tonle Sap (see also Mekong) 16
torana 75, 138
Tourane museum 83
Trach-lam 228
Trailokanatha 216, 217
Tra-kieu 66, 144, 198
Tran 197, 225, 226
Tran Ninh 30, 152
Trinh 226
Trung sisters 43
Tuc-mac 226
Tuol Dai Buon 63
Turks 49

U Bon 94
Udayadityavarman 11, 118, 120, 125, 151
Udayagiri 208
Uma 76
ushnisha 64, 212, 217, 219
U Thong 204, 214 et seq.

Van-lang 41
Varella, cape 15, 197
Vat Baset 118, 127
Vat Bhuddai Svarya 217
Vat Buddhaiaswan (Ayuthya) 219
Vat Chang Lom 212
Vat Chedi Chat Theo 212
Vat Chet Yot 219
Vat Ek 118, 127
Vat Jai Vadhanaram 217
Vat Kukut 208, 212
Vat Lak Muong 212
Vat Mahathat (Ayuthya) 210
Vat Mahathat (Lamphun) 208, 212, 217
Vat Mahathat (Lopburi) 206
Vat Mahathat (Pitsanulok) 212
Vat Mahathat (Ratburi) 219

Vat Mahathat (Savankhaloki) 212
Vat Mahathat (Sukhothai) 212
Vat Phra Men 146
Vat Phra Pathom 208
Vat Phra Mahathat (Chaiya) 219
Vat Phra Phai Luong 206, 212
Vat Phra Ram 217
Vat Phra Sing 221
Vat Phu 69, 151, 153
Vat Rat Burana 217, 219, 221
Vat Romlok 60, 64
Vat Si Chum 212, 219
Vat Si Liem 208
Vat Sisaket 222
Vat Sisawai 206, 212
Vat Sri Sanpet 217
Vat Suthat 221
Vat Suvannaram (Thonburi) 221
Vat Yai Suvannaram (Phetburi) 219
Vauban 232
Vedda 25
Venice 151
Versailles 151
Vieng Sra 84
Vientiane 15, 170, 223, 224
Vietnam, Vietnamese 11, 18, 19, 27, 33, 41 et seq., 133, 147 et seq., 191, 233
vihara 210
Vijaya 65, 133, 170, 197
vinh 233
Vinh-yen 45, 149
Vinitaruci 47
Vishnu 55, 59, 61, 77, 83, 92, 113, 120, 128, 130, 159, 164
Vishnu Balarama 61
Vishnu Parasurama 61

Wadhana, pass of 17
Warring States 33
Wei 59
"Wind and cloud" pattern 141

Xich-quy 41
Xieng Khouang 30
Xuan-loc 30

Yajnavaraha 109, 115
Yala 219
Yama 161
Yang Mum 198
Yang Prong 198
Yangtse-kiang 41
Yasodharapura 102
Yasodharatataka 102
Yasovarman 101 et seq.
Yen-Bay 33
Yüan 226
Yüeh-chi 32
Yunnan 17, 33, 47, 203, 210

Zen 47
Ziggurat 232